



THE DRAMATIC WORKS OF MOLIERE.



Desnoes del.

Ch. Colin sculp.

THE ROGUERIES OF SCAPIN.

THE DRAMATIC WORKS
OF
M O L I È R E

RENDERED INTO ENGLISH
BY HENRI VAN LAUN

A NEW EDITION
With a Prefatory Memoir, Introductory Notices and Notes

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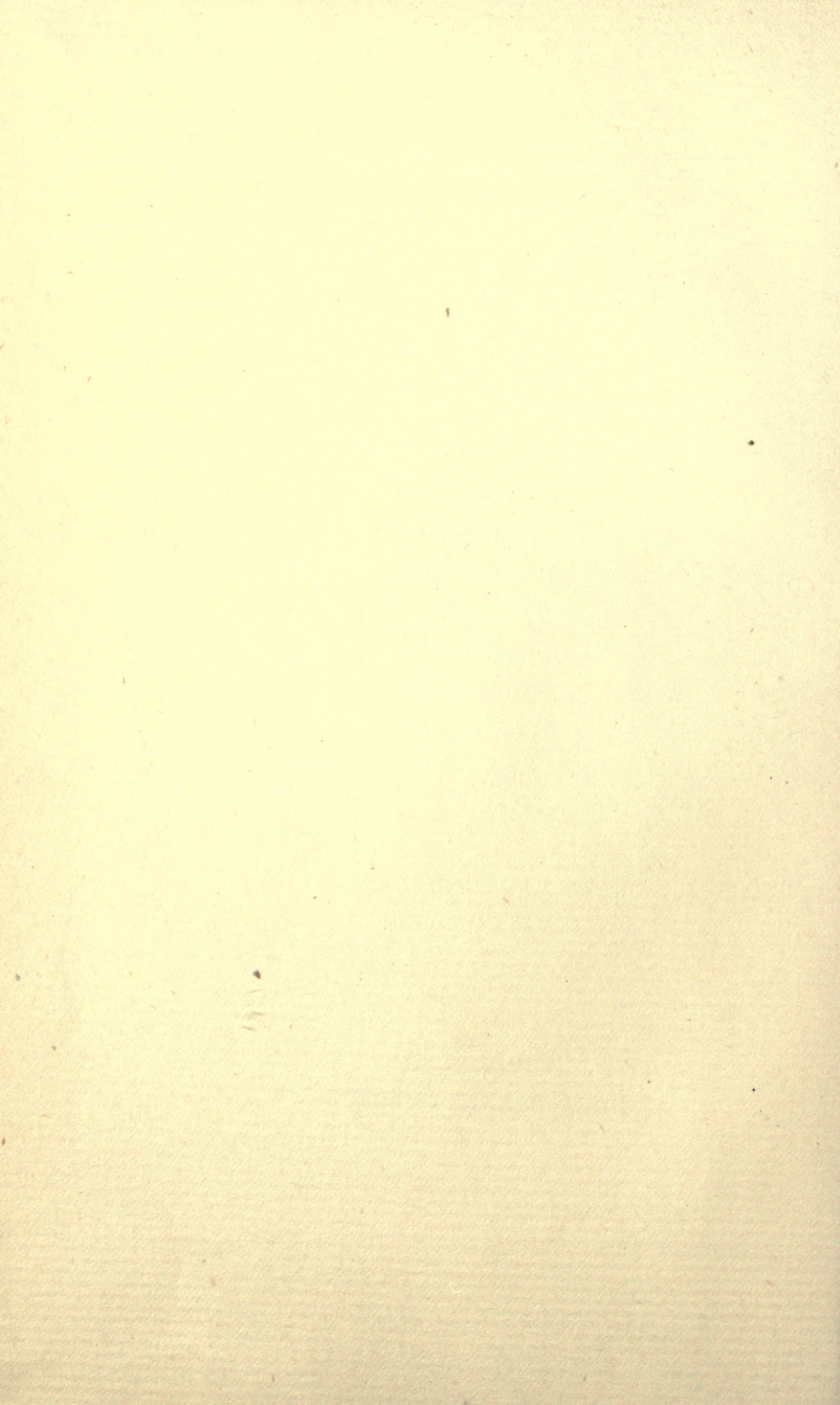


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LES FOURBERIES DE SCAPIN.
COMÉDIE.

THE ROGUERIES OF SCAPIN.
A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS.

(THE ORIGINAL IN PROSE.)

MAY 24TH, 1671.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

WHILST the King and the whole Court were in Flanders in 1671, Molière wished to produce a new play for the theatre of the Palais Royal, then freshly decorated, and he wrote *The Rogueries of Scapin*, which was performed on the 24th of May of the same year, and met with great success. It has been said that Molière wrote his farces to please the people: but with the exception of this comedy and *The Physician in Spite of Himself*, all his farces were written for, and first performed before the Court.

This comedy, in three acts, is partly classical, partly Italian, and partly French, and the character of Scapin enlivens the whole. Scapin is a master rogue, who robs, steals, and perjures himself; but all this in the most good-natured way imaginable. He cheats, not to benefit himself, but to be of advantage to Leander and Octave; he makes a fool of Géronte and Argante, merely to keep his hand in, and thrashes the first in revenge for having told a falsehood of him. Such a love for truth is wonderful in a man like Scapin whose intense roguery, fertile imagination, and gigantic impudence can exist only on the stage, but would soon reap in real life their well deserved reward.

The greater part of this play is taken from Terence's *Phormio*; or, *the Scheming Parasite*, of which the following is the subject.

Antipho, the son of Demipho, an Athenian, sees by accident Phanium, the unknown daughter of his uncle Chremes, and by the advice of Phormio, a parasite, marries her by trickery. Shortly after, his father and uncle return upon the same day, and are much vexed on hearing of this marriage. Phædrus, the son of Chremes, wishes to raise some money to purchase a music-girl with whom he is in love; and Geta, a servant of Demipho, and Phormio arrange that the former shall pretend to the old man that Phormio has consented to take back the woman whom Antipho has married, if Demipho will give her a portion of thirty minæ. The latter gives the money to Phædrus, who buys the girl. At this conjuncture, it becomes known that the wife of Antipho is really the daughter of Chremes; and they wish to get back the money from Phormio, who refuses, and finally betrays to Nausistrata, the Athenian wife of Chremes, the intrigue which the latter had carried on at Lemnos with the mother of Phanium.

The details of Molière's comedy are either from French or Italian origin.

It is said that the idea of Scapin's confession (Act ii., Scene 5) is taken

from an Italian farce, *Pantaloön, the Father of a Family*, where Harlequin, accused of having stolen something, falls on his knees and confesses to have committed many robberies of which he was never suspected. The scene of the sack (Act iii., Scene 2), which offended Boileau so much, was probably suggested to Molière by a farce which Tabarin acted in the open air, where an old miser, Lucas, takes the place of Captain Rodomont in a sack, and gets well beaten for his trouble by his own servant Tabarin, and by his daughter Isabella. The famous eleventh scene of the second act of *The Rogueries of Scapin* is borrowed chiefly from the fourth scene of the second act of *The Deceived Pedant*, written by Cyrano de Bergerac, which was published about 1654, and certainly acted long before Molière's play. The rogue in *The Deceived Pedant* is called Corbineli, the old miser, Granger—a parody of Jean Grangier, professor of rhetoric, and principal of the College of Beauvais—and Sylvester is called Paquier. The famous exclamation, "What the devil did he want in the galley?" is to be found there. There is also a similarity between the second scene of the third act of Bergerac's piece and the third scene of the third act of Molière's play. Molière, who probably knew Bergerac, when accused of having borrowed these scenes from the latter, is said to have replied, "These scenes were pretty good; I have taken them. People get hold again of their property where they find it."

There is also in *The Rogueries of Scapin* a reminiscence from a play of Plautus, called *Bacchides*; or, *the Twin Sisters*.

Ravenscroft (see Introductory Notice to *The Love-Tiff*, Vol. I., and Introductory Notice to *The Forced Marriage*, Vol. I.) has imitated part of Molière's comedy in his *Scaramouch, a Philosopher, Harlequin, a School-boy, Bravo, Merchant and Magician*, acted at the Theatre-Royal, 1677. Argante is called in this play Pancrace; Scapin, Plautino, and sometimes Harlequin; Octave is called Cynthio, and Leander Octavio.

Thomas Otway has also translated Molière's play under the title *The Cheats of Scapin*, acted at the Duke's Theatre in 1677, and dedicated to John, Earl of Rochester. Sylvester is called Shift; Argante, Thrifty; Géronte, Gripe; Carlos, Sly; Hyacinthe, Clara; and Zerbinette, Lucia. This appears to me the sole change which Otway has made, except that he has abbreviated, but not improved, some of the speeches.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ARGANTE, *father to Octave and Zerbinette.*

GÉRONTE, *father to Leander and Hyacinthe.*

OCTAVE, *son of Argante, and betrothed to Hyacinthe.*

LEANDER, *son of Géronte, and in love with Zerbinette.*

ZERBINETTE, *supposed a gipsy, afterwards found to be
the daughter of Argante.*

HYACINTHE, *daughter of Géronte.*

SCAPIN, *valet to Leander.*

SYLVESTER, *valet to Octave.*

NÉRINE, *nurse to Hyacinthe.*

CARLOS, *Scapin's friend.*

THE SCENE IS AT NAPLES.²

¹ This part was played by Molière himself. Scapin is one of the traditional servants of the *commedia dell' arte*. The name Scapin is from the Italian *scappare*, to run away, to escape, either on account of the poltroonery which he displays in the Italian farces, or on account of the dexterity with which he manages to commit all kinds of rogueries.

² As the scene is laid in Naples, it shows at once that the poet will give free scope to his imagination.

THE ROGUERIES OF SCAPIN.

(*LES FOURBERIES DE SCAPIN.*)

ACT I.

SCENE I.—OCTAVE, SYLVESTER.

OCT. Ah ! this is dire news to a heart in love ! a cruel strait to which I find myself reduced ! You have just heard at the port, Sylvester, that my father is about to return ?

SYL. Yes.

OCT. That he will arrive this very morning ?

SYL. This very morning ?

OCT. And that he comes back resolved to marry me ?

SYL. Yes.

OCT. To a daughter of Mr. G ronte ?

SYL. Of Mr. G ronte.

OCT. And that this young lady has been sent for from Tarente for that purpose ?

SYL. Yes.

OCT. And you have got this news from my uncle ?

SYL. From your uncle.

OCT. To whom my father has communicated this by letter ?

SYL. By letter.

OCT. And this uncle, you say, knows all about our affairs ?

SYL. All about our affairs.

OCT. Do speak, if it be all the same to you, instead of having the words dragged out of your mouth in that manner.³

SYL. What more would you have me say? You do not forget a single particular, and you state things just as they are.

OCT. Give me some advice, at least, and tell me what I am to do in this cruel plight.

SYL. In truth, I find myself as much at a loss as you are, and I have great need of advice myself.

OCT. I am bored to death by this confounded return.

SYL. I am not the less so.

OCT. When my father hears how matters stand, I shall find myself overwhelmed with a sudden storm of vehement scolding.

SYL. Scolding counts for nothing; and would to Heaven that I were quit at that rate! but, for my part, I am more likely to pay dearer for your follies; and I see already, gathering from afar, a cloud of cudgel-blows that will burst on my shoulders.

OCT. Oh Heavens! how am I to get out of this scrape?

SYL. You ought to have thought of that before getting into it.

OCT. Ah! you will be the death of me with your ill-timed lectures.

SYL. You will be much more the death of me with your thoughtless actions.

OCT. What am I to do? What resolution can I take? What remedy can I apply?

SCENE II.—OCTAVE, SCAPIN, SYLVESTER.

SCA. What now, Mr. Octave? What ails you? What is the matter? What is amiss? You are very much upset, I see.

OCT. Ah my good Scapin, I am lost; I am desperate; I am the most unfortunate of men.

³ In *Mélicerte*, Act ii., Scene 1 (see Vol. II.), a nearly similar scene takes place.

SCA. Why so ?

OCT. Have you learned nothing about what concerns me ?

SCA. No.

OCT. My father is coming back with Mr. G ronte, and they wish me to marry.

SCA. Well, what is there so terrible in that ?

OCT. Alas ! do you not know the cause of my uneasiness ?

SCA. No ; but it lies entirely with you for me to know it shortly ; I am of a consoling nature,⁴ and ready to interest myself in young people's affairs.

OCT. Ah ! Scapin, if you could invent something, concoct some plot to get me out of the difficulty in which I am, I should think that I owed you more than my life.

SCA. Truth to tell, there are few things impossible to me, when it pleases me to meddle with them. There is no doubt that I have received from Heaven a genius, sufficiently fine to contrive all those pretty tricks of wit, those ingenious intrigues, to which the ignorant vulgar give the name of rogueries ; and I can say, without boasting, that there never was a man who was a cleverer manipulator of springs and traps, and who has won more glory at that noble craft than I. But, upon my word, merit is too badly treated now-a-days ; and I have given up all these things since a certain vexatious affair happened to me.

OCT. How ! what affair, Scapin ?

SCAP. An adventure through which I became embroiled with the law.

OCT. The law ?

SCA. Yes, we had a little quarrel together.

SYL. You and the law ?

SCA. Yes. It treated me very badly ; and I felt so nettled at the ingratitude of the age, that I made up my mind to have nothing more to do with it. Basta ! Do not let that interrupt the story of your adventure.

OCT. You are aware, Scapin, that two months ago Mr.

⁴ The original has *je suis homme consolatif*. This last adjective is no longer in use.

Géronte and my father went together on a voyage about a certain business in which their interests are connected.⁵

SCA. I know that.

OCT. And that Leander and I were left by our fathers, I under the care of Sylvester, and Leander under yours.

SCA. Yes. I have very well discharged that duty.

OCT. Some time after, Leander happened to meet with a young gipsy, with whom he fell in love.

SCA. This also I know.

OCT. Being fast friends, he immediately made me the confidant of his love, and took me to see this girl, whom I thought handsome, certainly, but not so much so as he would have had me think her. He did nothing else but entertain me about her each day, exalting every moment her beauty and her grace, lauding her wit, dilating rapturously upon the charms of her conversation, the most minute details of which he reported to me, and which he always endeavoured to make me find the most witty in the world. Often he quarrelled with me for my not being sensible enough to what he was telling me, and incessantly blamed me for my indifference to the flames of love.

SCA. As yet I fail to see where all this is leading to.

OCT. One day when I accompanied him to go to the people who were taking care of the object of his love, we heard, issuing from a small house, in an out-of-the-way street, some wailing intermixed with many sobs. We inquire the cause; a woman answers us, sighing, that there we could witness a most pitiful sight of some foreign people, and that, unless we were most insensible, we could not fail to be touched by it.

SCA. Where does this lead us to?

OCT. Curiosity made me induce Leander to go and see what it was. We entered a large room, where we saw a dying old woman, nursed by a servant uttering lamentations, and a young girl, the most handsome and the most interesting that ever was seen, melting into tears.

SCA. Ah! ah!

⁵ All that follows is taken from Terence's *Phormio*; but there it is a slave who tells the story.

OCT. Any one else would have appeared frightful in the state she was in ; for she had nothing to cover her but a miserable scanty petticoat, with a night boddice of common fustian ; and her head-dress was a yellow mob-cap, turned up on the crown, from which her hair fell in disorder on her shoulders ; and, notwithstanding, as she stood there, she shone with a thousand attractions, and there was nothing but grace and charm about her.

SCA. I can see the thing coming.

OCT. Had you seen her, Scapin, in the state in which I have described her, you would have thought her lovely.

SCA. Oh ! I do not doubt it ; and, without having seen her, I can fancy her altogether charming.

OCT. Her tears were none of those disagreeable tears that disfigure a face ; even in weeping, she had a winning grace, and her sorrow was the loveliest in the world.

SCA. I can perceive all this.

OCT. She moved everyone to tears, throwing herself affectionately on the body of the dying woman, whom she called her dear mother ; and there was not a soul which was not touched to the quick at seeing such a good character.

SCA. In fact, this is touching ; and I can easily imagine that this good character made you fall in love with her.

OCT. A barbarian would have done the same, Scapin.

SCA. Of course. One could not help it !

OCT. After a few words, with which I tried to assuage the sorrow of this charming afflicted girl, we went out ; and asking Leander what he thought of her, he answered me coldly that she was tolerably pretty. I felt nettled at the coldness with which he spoke of her, and I did not wish to reveal to him the effect which her beauty had produced on my heart.⁶

SYL. (*To Octave*). If you do not cut this story short, we shall be in for it till to-morrow. Let me sum it up in two words. (*To Scapin*). His heart is all ablaze from that moment ; life becomes unendurable to him unless he goes to console his amiable bereaved. His frequent visits

⁶ Auger, one of the commentators of Molière, observes that Octave does not find Leander's gipsy sufficiently pretty, but is nettled because Leander is not smitten by the charms of Hyacinthe.

are declined by the servant, whom the death of the mother has raised to the post of governess. Behold my master in despair ; he importunes, begs, implores ; all of no use. He is told that the girl, though without means and without support, is of good family, and that his addresses will not be tolerated, unless he marries her. Behold his love increased by obstacles. He racks his brain, debates, reasons, hesitates, takes a resolution : the upshot of which is that he has been married to her these three days.

SCA. I understand.

SYL. Now, add to this the unforeseen return of his father, who was not expected these two months ; the discovery by the uncle of the secret of our marriage, and the other projected union with the daughter of Mr. G ron te, by a second wife, to whom, they say, he was married at Tarente.

OCT. And, in addition to all this, put the poverty in which this amiable creature finds herself, and my inability to get the means wherewith to relieve her.

SCA. And is this all ? You are both very much upset by a trifle ! There is certainly much to be alarmed at ! Are you not ashamed to be thus at your wits' end, for so small a matter ? What the devil ? there you are as tall and big as father and mother, and you cannot find in your head, nor your wit invent some lover's ruse, some honest little stratagem, to put your affairs straight ! Fie ! a plague upon the booby ! I wish they had given me those greybeards of bygone days to lead by the nose ; I would have had no difficulty in getting the better of them all ; and I was not bigger than this, when I had already distinguished myself by a hundred pretty tricks.

SYL. I confess that Heaven has not given me those talents, and that I have not the wit to entangle myself with the law, as you have.

OCT. But here comes my dear Hyacinthe.

SCENE III.—HYACINTHE, OCTAVE, SCAPIN, SYLVESTER.

HYA. Ah ! Octave, is it true what Sylvester has just told N rine, that your father is coming back, and that he wishes you to marry.

OCT. Yes, fair Hyacinthe ; and those tidings have struck

me a cruel blow. But what do I see? you weep! Why these tears? Do you suspect, tell me, any inconstancy on my part? and are you not convinced of my love for you?

HYA. Yes, Octave, I am certain that you love me, but I am not so sure that you will always do so.

OCT. As if one could love you, and not love you for life?

HYA. I have heard it said, Octave, that your sex loves not so long as ours, and that the passions which men betray are fires which are as easily quenched as kindled.

OCT. Ah! my dear Hyacinthe, my heart in that case is not like that of other men; and, as regards myself, I feel that I shall love you till death.

HYA. I believe that you feel as you say, and I doubt not that your words are sincere; but I dread a power which will combat, in your heart, the tender sentiments which you may have for me. You are dependent on a father, who wishes to marry you to another; and I am sure that I should die should this misfortune come to pass.

OCT. No, fair Hyacinthe, there is no father who can compel me to break my faith with you; and, rather than leave you, I am determined to quit my country, and life itself if necessary. Without having even seen her, I have already taken an unconquerable dislike to the lady whom they intended for me, and, without being cruel, I wish that the sea would drive her far away from here for evermore. Do not cry, then, I beg of you, sweet Hyacinthe, for your tears kill me, and I cannot look at them without being grieved to the heart.

HYA. Since you wish it, I shall dry them, and I shall steadfastly await what it shall please Heaven to do with me.

OCT. Heaven will favour us.

HYA. As long as you are true, Heaven cannot be adverse.

OCT. I assuredly shall be so.

HYA. In that case I shall be happy.

SCA. (*Aside*). Upon my word, she is not such a fool; and I find her pretty tolerable.

OCT. (*Pointing to Scapin*). Here is a man who, if he liked, could be of wonderful assistance to us in all our needs.

SCA. I have made a solemn vow not to meddle any more with the world ; but, if both of you urge me very strongly, I might perhaps . . .

OCT. Ah ! if it wants nothing but strong urging to obtain your aid, I implore you with all my heart to undertake the guidance of our bark.

SCA. (*To Hyacinthe*). And you, have you nothing to say to me ?

HYA. I entreat of you, likewise, by all that is most dear to you in this world, to assist us in our love.

SCA. One must give way sometimes, and show some human feelings. You may be at rest, I shall interest myself for you.

OCT. Be assured that . . .

SCA. (*To Octave*). Hush ! (*To Hyacinthe*). And now go, and make yourself easy.

SCENE IV.—OCTAVE, SCAPIN, SYLVESTER.

SCA. (*To Octave*). And you, prepare yourself with firmness to meet your father.

OCT. I confess that this meeting makes me tremble beforehand ; and I feel a natural timidity which I cannot overcome.

SCA. You must, however, appear firm at the first shock, for fear, that, seeing your weakness, he will lead you like a child. There, try to study calmness. A little boldness ; and take care to answer firmly everything which he may tell you.

OCT. I shall do my very best.

SCA. Come, let us rehearse a little, just to get your hand in. Let us repeat your part somewhat, and let us see if you will do well. Come ! a firm countenance, head erect, looks steady.

OCT. Like this !

SCA. A little more still.

OCT. In this way ?

SCA. That is it. Imagine me to be your father, who has just arrived, and answer me unflinchingly, as if I were he. How ! you scoundrel, you good for nothing wretch, you son unworthy of a father like me, do you dare to appear before me after your nice behaviour, after the vile

trick which you have played me during my absence? Is this the fruit of all my cares, you rogue? Is this the fruit of all my cares? the respect which is due to me, the esteem which you have for me? (That is it). And you have the insolence, you knave, to engage yourself without the consent of your father, to contract a clandestine marriage! Answer me, you rogue, answer me. Let us hear a few of your specious arguments. . . . Ah! what the devil! you have not a word to say.

OCT. It is because I fancy that it is my father whom I hear.

SCA. Eh. He of course. For this very reason you ought not to look like a simpleton.

OCT. I shall pluck up a little more resolution, and I shall answer with firmness.

SCA. Are you sure?

OCT. I am sure.

SYL. There comes your father.

OCT. Oh Heaven! I am lost.⁷

SCENE V.—SCAPIN, SYLVESTER.

SCA. Hullo, Octave! stop, Octave. He has fled! What a poor specimen of a man! Let us wait for the old man.

SYL. What shall I say to him?

SCA. Leave it to me, and do as I do.

SCENE VI.—ARGANTE, SCAPIN, and SYLVESTER, *at the farther end of the stage.*

ARG. (*Believing himself alone*). Has ever the like been heard of?

SCA. (*To Sylvester*). He has already heard of the affair; and it so runs into his head, that he speaks aloud of it when alone.

ARG. (*Believing himself alone*). This is a very great piece of audacity!

SCA. (*To Sylvester*). Let us listen awhile.

ARG. (*Believing himself alone*). I should much like to know what they can tell me about this lovely marriage.

⁷ This scene is taken from Terence, but is much shorter in the Latin dramatist.

SCA. (*Aside*). We have already thought about that.⁸

ARG. (*Believing himself alone*). Will they try to deny the affair?

SCA. (*Aside*). No, we do not dream of such a thing.

ARG. (*Believing himself alone*). Or will they endeavour to exonerate themselves?

SCA. (*Aside*). Such a thing might be done.

ARG. (*Believing himself alone*). Will they pretend to entertain me with some unlikely stories?

SCA. (*Aside*). Perhaps so.

ARG. (*Believing himself alone*). All their speeches will be useless.

SCA. (*Aside*). We shall see about that.⁸

ARG. (*Believing himself alone*). They shall not impose upon me.

SCA. (*Aside*). We ought not to swear to anything.

ARG. (*Believing himself alone*). I shall know how to put my rascal of a son under lock and key.

SCA. (*Aside*). We shall provide for that.

ARG. (*Believing himself alone*). And as for this scoundrel Sylvester, I shall give him a sound thrashing.

SYL. (*To Scapin*). I should have been much surprised if he had forgotten me.

ARG. (*Perceiving Sylvester*). Ah! Ah! you are there, trustworthy family guardian, conscientious guide of young men!

SCA. I am delighted to see you back again, sir.

ARG. Good day, Scapin. (*To Sylvester*). You have really carried out my orders in a nice manner! and my son has behaved very properly in my absence!

SCA. You are in good health, from what I see?

ARG. Pretty well. (*To Sylvester*). You have nothing to say, you rascal, nothing at all.

SCA. Has your journey been a pleasant one?

ARG. Pleasant enough, good Heaven! Let me have my quarrel in peace.

SCA. You wish to quarrel!

ARG. Yes, I wish to quarrel.

SCA. And with whom, Sir?

⁸ This is borrowed chiefly from Terence's *Phormio*.

ARG. (*Pointing to Sylvester*). With this scoundrel.

SCA. And why?

ARG. Have you not heard what has happened in my absence?

SCA. I have heard some little trifle spoken of.

ARG. What! some little trifle! An affair of that kind!

SCA. You are somewhat in the right.

ARG. A daring like this!

SCA. That is true.

ARG. A son who marries without the consent of his father?

SCA. Yes, there is something to be said in that respect. But I would advise not to make a noise about it.

ARG. I am not at all of this opinion; and I will make as much noise as I like. What! do not you think that I have every possible reason to be in a rage?

SCA. Yes, indeed. I was so myself at first, when I came to know of it, and I have taken your part so far as to quarrel with your son. Ask him, how thoroughly I have upbraided him, and the lesson which I have read him on the little respect he showed to a father whose footsteps he ought to kiss. I could not have spoken better to him, had I been yourself. But after all! I have come back to reason, and I have reflected, that at the bottom, he is not so much to blame as one would think.

ARG. What pretty tale is this? He is not so much to blame to go and get married point blank to a strange girl?

SCA. What could he do? He was led to it by his fate.

ARG. Ah! Ah! That is certainly the prettiest reason in the world. One has only to commit every imaginable crime, to cheat, to steal, to murder and to say in excuse that one was led to it by one's fate.

SCA. Good Heavens! you take my words in too philosophical a sense. I mean to say, that he has found himself fatally entangled in this affair.

ARG. And why did he entangle himself in it?

SCA. Do you expect him to be as wise as you? Young men will be young men, and have not all the prudence necessary to keep at all times out of mischief: witness our Leander, who, notwithstanding all my lessons, all my remonstrances, has gone, and done very much worse than

your son. I should very much like to know whether you yourself have not been young, and have not, in your time, committed follies like others. I have heard it said that, in by-gone days, you were a regular follower of the ladies; that you held your own with the most gallant of that time, and that you did not come near them without trying your utmost.

ARG. That is true, I agree to that; but I always confined myself to gallantry, and I never went so far as to do what he has done.

SCA. What would you have him do? He sees a young girl who looks favourably on him (for he takes after you in that, and is well looked upon by every woman); he finds her charming, pays her visits, whispers sweet nonsense to her, sighs gallantly, tries to pass for a passionate lover. She yields to his ardour; he takes advantage of his good luck. Behold him caught with her by her parents, who, by compulsion, oblige him to marry her.

SYL. (*Aside*). What a clever rogue this!

SCA. Would you have preferred him to allow himself to be killed? It is better to be married than to be dead.

ARG. They did not tell me that the affair happened thus.

SCA. (*Pointing to Sylvester*). Ask him if you like. He will tell you nothing to the contrary.

ARG. (*To Sylvester*). Is it by compulsion that he was married?

SYL. Yes, Sir.

SCA. Would I tell you a lie?

ARG. He ought to have gone then to a notary to protest against this violence.

SCA. That is what he would not do.

ARG. It would have made it easier for me to annul this marriage.

SCA. To annul this marriage?

ARG. Yes.

SCA. You will not annul it.

ARG. I shall not annul it, say you?

SCA. No.

ARG. What! have I not a father's rights in my favour, and the plea of the violence which has been done to my son?

SCA. Upon this point, he will not be at one with you.

ARG. He will not be at one with me?

SCA. No.

ARG. My own son?

SCA. Your own son. Would you have him confess that he could be frightened, and that it was by force that they have made him do those things. He will know better than to admit that; it would be wrong to himself, and proclaim him unworthy of a father like you.

ARG. I do not care for that.

SCA. It is necessary, for his honour and for yours, that he say in society that he has married her of his own free will.

ARG. And I desire, I, for my honour and for his, that he shall say the reverse.

SCA. No, I am sure he will not do so.

ARG. I shall force him to it.

SCA. He will not do it, I tell you.

ARG. He shall do it, or I shall disinherit him.

SCA. You?

ARG. I.

SCA. Good!

ARG. What do you mean by good!

SCA. You will not disinherit him.

ARG. I shall not disinherit him?

SCA. No.

ARG. No?

SCA. No.

ARG. Aha! that is a good joke! I shall not disinherit my son?

SCA. No, I tell you.

ARG. Who shall prevent me?

SCA. You, yourself.

ARG. I?

SCA. Yes, you will not have the heart to do it.

ARG. I shall.

SCA. You are joking.

ARG. I am not joking at all.

SCA. A father's feelings will perform their functions.

ARG. They shall do nothing of the kind.

SCA. Yes, yes.

ARG. I tell you that it shall be.

SCA. Nonsense.

ARG. Do not say that it is nonsense.

SCA. Good Heavens! I know you; you are naturally good-hearted.

ARG. I am not at all good-natured, and I can be very spiteful when I like.⁹ Let us drop this subject which provokes my temper. (*To Sylvester*). Go, you rascal, go and fetch my scamp, while I look in upon Mr. G ron te, to tell him of my disgrace?

SCA. Sir, if I can be of use in anything, you have but to command.

ARG. I thank you. (*Aside*). Ah! why should he be an only son! and why have I not at this hour the daughter of whom Heaven has deprived me, to make her my heiress.

SCENE VII.—SCAPIN, SYLVESTER.

SYL. I confess that you are a great man, and that the business is in a fair way; but, on the other hand, we are urgently pressed for money for our wants; and on all sides there is a lot of people barking after us.

SCA. Let me manage it, the trick is found. I am only seeking in my own mind a man upon whom we can depend to impersonate one of whom I am in want. Wait. Hold yourself up a little. Slouch your cap like a naughty boy. Put one leg forward. Put your hand on your hip. Just look ferocious. Swagger up and down like a king on the stage. That is right. Follow me. I know a secret to disguise your face and voice.

SYL. Let me beg of you, at least, not to get me into a scrape with the law.

SCA. Be not afraid. We shall share the danger like brothers; and three years at the galleys more or less will not deter a noble heart.

⁹ This dialogue from "I shall disinherit him" until "when I like" is found also in *The Imaginary Invalid*, when Argan speaks of placing his daughter in a convent. Hence, La Grange, and Vinot, the first editors of the collected works of Moli re, have left out this passage in *The Rogueries of Scapin*.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—GÉRONTE, ARGANTE.

GER. Yes, I doubt not, if this weather last, we shall have our people here to-day; and a sailor who came from Tarente assures me that he has seen my man ready to embark. But the arrival of my daughter will find things in an unfavourable state for what we proposed; and what you have just told me about your son strangely puts an end to the measures we had agreed upon.

ARG. Do not trouble yourself about it; I assure you that I shall overthrow this obstacle, and I shall see about it immediately.

GER. Upon my word, Mr. Argante, shall I tell you? the bringing up of children is a thing which must be managed with a firm hand.

ARG. Without a doubt. What do you mean, though?

GER. What I mean is this, that the bad conduct of young people is most frequently caused by the bad education which their fathers have given them.

ARG. This happens sometimes. But what would you convey by this?

GER. What would I convey by this?

ARG. Yes.

GER. That had you, as a strict father, kept your son well in hand, he would not have played you the trick which he has.

ARG. Very good. Thus you have kept yours better in hand?

GER. There is no doubt of it; and I should be very sorry if he had done anything like this.

ARG. And if this son, which, as a strict father, you have kept so well in hand, had done worse still than mine? Eh!

GER. How?

ARG. How?

GER. What does that mean?

ARG. It means, Mr. Géronte, that one must not be too quick to censure the conduct of others; and that those who are fond of finding fault ought to look first at home to see if there be nothing wrong.

GER. I do not understand this riddle.

ARG. It shall be explained to you.

GER. Have you perchance heard something about my son?

ARG. May be.

GER. And what, then?

ARG. When I was angry, your Scapin told me the affair only in a summary way, and you can get the details from him, or from some one else. As for me, I am going quickly to consult a lawyer, to take advice about the means which I have to use. Till by and by.

SCENE II.—GÉRONTE, *alone*.

GER. What can this affair be? Worse still than his? As for me, I cannot see that one could do worse; and I think that to marry without the consent of one's father is a deed that excels everything imaginable.

SCENE III.—GÉRONTE, LEANDER.

GER. Ah! here you are!

LEA. (*Running to G ron te to embrace him*). Ah! father, how glad I am to see you back again!

GER. (*Refusing to embrace Leander*). Gently. A little business first.

LEA. Allow me to embrace you, and to . . .

GER. (*Still pushing him back*). Gently, I tell you.

LEA. What, father! you refuse me to show you my joy by embracing you?

GER. Yes. We have something to unravel together.

LEA. What is that?

GER. Stand straight, that I may look you in the face.

LEA. What is the matter?

GER. Look me full in the face.

LEA. Well?

GER. What has happened here?

LEA. Happened here?

GER. Yes. What have you done in my absence?

LEA. What should I have done, father?

GER. It is not I who wish to have done something, but who ask what you have been doing?

LEA. I? I have not done anything of which you have cause to complain.

GER. Not anything?

LEA. No.

GER. You are very firm.

LEA. Because I am perfectly sure of my innocence.

GER. Scapin has, however, told me some news about you.

LEA. Scapin?

GER. Ah! ah! that word makes you blush.

LEA. He has told you something about me?

GER. This is not at all the proper place to get at the bottom of this business, and we shall sift it elsewhere. Go home; I shall be back there presently. Ah! wretch, if you have disgraced me, I renounce you as my son, and you can make your mind up to leave my presence for ever.

SCENE IV.—LEANDER, *alone*.

To betray me in this manner. A scoundrel who, for a hundred reasons, ought to be the first to keep secret the things which I confide to him, is the first to disclose them to my father. Ah! I swear to Heaven that his treachery shall not remain unpunished.

SCENE V.—OCTAVE, LEANDER, SCAPIN.

OCT. My dear Scapin, how much I owe to your cares! What an admirable fellow you are! and how good has Heaven been to send you to my aid!

LEA. Ah! ah! you are here! I am delighted to have found you, Mr. Rascal.

SCA. Your servant, Sir. You do me too much honour.

LEA. (*Drawing his sword*). You play the saucy fool. Ah! I shall teach you. . . .

SCA. (*Falling on his knees*). Sir!

OCT. (*Coming between them to prevent Leander striking Scapin*). Ah! Leander!

LEA. No, Octave, do not hold me back, pray.

SCA. (*To Leander*). Eh! Sir!

OCT. (*Holding Leander back*). For mercy's sake!

LEA. (*Wishing to strike Scapin*). Let me satisfy my resentment.

OCT. For friendship's sake, Leander, do not ill-treat him.

SCA. What have I done to you, Sir?

LEA. (*Wishing to strike Scapin*). What have you done to me, you wretch!

OCT. (*Holding Leander again back*). Eh! Gently.

LEA. No, Octave, I wish to make him confess the treachery which he has practised on me just now. Yes, you scoundrel, I know the trick which you have played me; I have just been told of it, and you did not think perhaps that this secret would be revealed to me; but I shall have the confession from your own mouth, or I shall pass this sword through your body.

SCA. Ah, Sir, would you have the heart to do this?

LEA. Speak then.

SCA. Have I done anything to you, Sir?

LEA. Yes, you scoundrel, and your conscience tells you but too plainly what it is.

SCA. I assure you that I am ignorant of it.

LEA. (*Advancing to strike Scapin*). You are ignorant of it?

OCT. (*Holding Leander back*). Leander!

SCA. Well! Sir, since you will have it so, I will confess that I and my friends have drunk that small quarter cask of Spanish wine which you had as a present a few days ago; and that I made a slit in the barrel, and spilt some water around to make you believe that the wine had run out.

LEA. It is you, you gallows-bird, who have drunk my Spanish wine, and who have been the cause of my scolding the servant, thinking it was she who had played me that trick?

SCA. Yes, Sir. I ask your pardon for it.

LEA. I am very glad to hear this. But that is not the affair in question at present.

SCA. It is not that, Sir.

LEA. No: it is something else which concerns me much more, and I will have you tell me.

SCA. I do not remember having done aught else, Sir.

LGA. (*Wishing to strike Scapin*). You will not tell me?

SCA. Tell what?

OCT. (*Holding Leander*). Gently!

SCA. Well, Sir, it is true that three weeks ago you sent me one evening to take a little watch to the young gipsy whom you love. I came back to the house, my clothes covered with mud, and my face bleeding, and I told you that I had been attacked by thieves who had beaten me well, and stolen the watch. It was myself who kept it, Sir.

LEA. It is you who have kept my watch?

SCA. Yes, Sir, to see what o'clock it is.

LEA. Ah! Ah! these are pretty things to find out, and I have a very trusty servant, certainly! But it is not even about that that I am inquiring.

SCA. It is not that?

LEA. No, you infamous wretch; there is something else that I wish you to confess to me.

SCA. (*Aside*). The plague take it!

LEA. Out with it, quick, I am in a hurry.

SCA. This is all that I have done, Sir.

LEA. (*Wishing to strike Scapin*). Is that all?

OCT. (*Getting in front of Leander*). Ah!

SCA. Well! yes, Sir. You remember that ghost, six months ago, who dealt you such a lot of cudgel-blows in the night, and nearly made you break your neck in a cellar in which you fell, running away.

LEA. Well?

SCA. It was I, Sir, who played the ghost.

LEA. It was you who played the ghost, you wretch?

SCA. Yes, Sir, I did it only to frighten you, and to prevent you from letting us gad about every night as you did.

LEA. I shall remember, at fit time and place, all that I have just learned. But I wish to come to the fact, and have you to confess what you have been saying to my father.

SCA. To your father?

LEA. Yes, you rascal, to my father.

SCA. I have not even seen him since his return.

LEA. You have not seen him?

SCA. No, Sir.

LEA. Are you sure?

SCA. Quite sure. I can make him tell you so himself.

LEA. It is from himself that I have got it.

SCA. By your leave, he has not spoken the truth.

SCENE VI.—LEANDER, OCTAVE, CARLOS, SCAPIN.

CAR. I am the bearer of some news, Sir, which is ill-fated to your love.

LEA. How so?

CAR. The gipsies are on the point of carrying away Zerbinette; and she herself, with tears in her eyes, has charged me to come and tell you quickly, that if within two hours, you do not bring them the money which they claim for her, you will lose her for ever.

LEA. In two hours?

CAR. In two hours.

SCENE VII.—LEANDER, OCTAVE, SCAPIN.

LEA. Ah! my good Scapin, I implore you to help me.

SCA. (*Passing haughtily before Leander*). Ah, my good Scapin! I am my good Scapin now that you need me.

LEA. Come, I forgive you for all you have said to me, and for worse still, if you have done it to me.

SCA. Not at all, not at all, do not forgive me anything; run your sword through my body; I shall be delighted to be killed by you.

LEA. No. I rather beg of you to give me my life, by helping me with my love.

SCA. Not so, not so; you had better kill me.

LEA. You are too precious to me; and I beseech you to be willing to employ for me that admirable talent of yours that overcomes all things.

SCA. No, kill me, I tell you.

LEA. Ah! for mercy's sake, think no more about it, and set your wits to work to give me the help which I ask from you.

OCT. Scapin, you must do something for him.

SCA. How can I, after such an outrage.

LEA. I beg of you to forget my passion, and to use your skill for me.

OCT. I add my prayers to his.

SCA. I have that insult still on my mind.

OCT. You must forego your resentment.

LEA. Would you leave me, Scapin, in this cruel plight in which my love finds itself?

SCA. To come and insult me unawares in that way?

LEA. I am in the wrong, I admit.

SCA. To call me a scoundrel, a rascal, a gallows-bird, an infamous wretch!

LEA. I regret it with all my heart.

SCA. To wish to run his sword through my body!

LEA. I beg your pardon for it from the bottom of my heart; and if nothing will satisfy you but to see me on my knees beseeching you once more not to abandon me, I will do so.

OCT. Ah! upon my word, Scapin, you ought to give way now.

SCA. Rise. The next time do not be so hasty.

LEA. Will you promise me to set to work for me?

SCA. We will think about it.

LEA. But time presses, as you know.

SCA. Do not trouble yourself about it. How much do you want?

LEA. Five hundred crowns.

SCA. And you?

OCT. Two hundred pistoles.

SCA. I shall draw this money from your parents. (*To Octave*). As for yours, the train is already laid. (*To Leander*). And, as regards yours, though miserly to the last degree, it will cost far less trouble still; for, as to wit, you know, Heaven be praised, that he has not got a very great stock; and I think him a sort of man who will believe anything which you tell him. This without offence to you; for there is not the slightest similarity between him and you; and you know full well the opinion of every one, that he is your father only for form's sake.

LEA. Gently, Scapin!

SCA. All right, one does not mind that! Are you jesting? But I see Octave's father coming. Let us begin with him, since he comes to us. Get you both away. (*To Octave*). And you, tell your Sylvester to come quickly to play his part.

SCENE VIII.—ARGANTE, SCAPIN.

SCA. (*Aside*). He is chewing the cud.

ARG. (*Believing himself alone*). To have so little decency and consideration. To rush headlong into an engagement like this! Ah! Ah! impertinent youth.

SCA. Your servant, Sir.

ARG. Good day, Scapin.

SCA. You are thinking about this affair of your son?

ARG. I tell you candidly that it puts me out greatly.

ARG. Life is bestrewed with crosses, Sir; it is as well to be always prepared for them; and I always bear in mind the saying of an ancient, which I heard a long time ago.

ARG. What is it?

SCA. That when a father of a family has been away from home for some time, he ought to let his mind run on all the sad accidents which he may meet on his return; ought to fancy his house burned down, his money stolen, his wife dead, his son maimed, his daughter corrupted; and whenever one of these things has not happened, impute it to his good luck. As for me, I have always practised this lesson in my little philosophy; and I have never returned home without holding myself ready for the anger of my masters, their abuse, their insults, their kicks, their whacks, their thrashings; and whenever I have had less, I have thanked my stars for it.¹⁰

ARG. This is all very well; but this impertinent marriage, which interferes with the one which we wish to contract, is a thing which I cannot bear, and I have just consulted lawyers to undo it.

SCA. In truth, Sir, if you take my advice, you will try, by some other means, to arrange this affair. You know what law-suits are in this country, and you will get yourself into some strange difficulties.

ARG. You are right, I see that well enough. But what other way is there?

SCA. I think that I have found one. The sympathy evoked by your sorrow just now, has made me consider about some means of quieting your uneasiness; for I do not like to see honest fathers vexed by their children,

¹⁰ This speech of Scapin is again borrowed from Terence.

without feeling for them; and I have at all times been particularly fond of you.

ARG. I am very much obliged to you.

SCA. I have been therefore to see the brother of this girl who has been married. He is one of those fire-eaters by profession, those people who are all cut and thrust, who talk of nothing else than slashing, and who make no more ado about killing a man than about swallowing a glass of wine. I have got him to speak about this marriage, have shown him the facility, offered by his own violence, to undo it, your prerogatives as a father, and the support you would receive from the law by reason of your right, your money, and your friends. In short, I have so turned him about on all sides, that he has listened to the proposals which I have made to him to settle the matter for a certain sum; and he will give his consent to annul the marriage, provided you give him the money.

ARG. And what did he require?

SCA. Oh! everything preposterous, at first.

ARG. And what?

SCA. Extravagant things.

ARG. But what, pray?

SCA. He talked of no less than five or six hundred pistoles.

ARG. Five or six hundred quartan fevers to make an end of him! Is he jesting?

SCA. That is what I told him. I utterly rejected all such proposals, and I plainly gave him to understand that you were not a dupe, to ask you for five or six hundred pistoles. At last, after a great deal of talk, this is the result of our conference. The time draws near, said he to me, that I must set out for the army; I am busy about my outfit, and the need which I have of some money makes me consent, in spite of myself, to what is proposed to me. I want a troop-horse, and I cannot have one, ever so middling, for less than sixty pistoles.

ARG. Very well! for sixty pistoles, I will give them.

SCA. Then the accoutrements and the pistols; and that will amount at least to twenty pistoles more.

ARG. Twenty pistoles and sixty make fourscore.

SCA. Exactly.

ARG. It is a good deal: but be it so. I consent to this.

SCA. He must also have a horse for his servant, which will cost at least thirty pistoles.

ARG. What the deuce! Let him go on foot; he shall have nothing at all.

SCA. Sir!

ARG. No: he is an impertinent fellow.

SCA. Would you have his servant go on foot?

ARG. Let him go as he likes, and the master also.

SCA. Good Heaven, Sir, do not stop short at such a trifle. Do not go to law, Sir, I beg you; and sooner give it all, to keep clear from its hands.

ARG. Very well then; I am ready to give also the thirty pistoles.

SCA. He wants, besides, so he says, a mule to carry . . .

ARG. Let him go to the devil with his mule! It is too much; and we shall go before the judges.

SCA. For mercy's sake, Sir . . .

ARG. No, I shall do nothing at all.

SCA. A tiny mule, Sir.

ARG. I shall not give him as much as an ass.

SCA. Consider . . .

ARG. No, I prefer going to law.

SCA. Oh, Sir, what are you talking about, and what a resolution to take? Just cast your eyes upon the ins and outs of the laws. Just think how many appeals and degrees of jurisdiction; how many vexatious proceedings; how many delightful animals, through whose claws you will have to pass: sergeants, attorneys, counsels, registrars, substitutes, reporters, judges, and their clerks. Not one of those folks but who will oppose the most straightforward case in the world for the merest trifle. A bailiff¹¹ will serve you with forged deeds, upon which you shall be condemned without your knowing it. Your attorney will come to terms with the other side, and sell you for ready cash. Your counsel, won over in the same manner, will be wanting when your cause has to be pleaded, or adduce reasons that shall only beat about the bush, but not go home to the facts. The registrar will deliver sentence

¹¹ The original has *sergeant*.

and judgment against you in your absence. The clerk of the reporter will make away with documents, or the reporter himself will deny what he has seen ; and when, with the utmost precautions, you shall have parried all this, you will be astonished to find that your judges have been prejudiced against you, either by some pious people, or by the ladies with whom they are in love. Oh ! Sir, if it be in your power, keep out of this hell. It is to be damned already in this world, to have to plead ; and the mere notion of a law-suit would be enough to make me fly as far as the Indies.¹²

ARG. And at how much does he reckon this mule?

SCA. For the mule, Sir, for the horse, and that of his man, for the accoutrements and pistols, and to pay a little bill which he owes his landlady, he asks in all two hundred pistoles.

ARG. Two hundred pistoles ?

SCA. Yes.

ARG. (*Walking about in a passion*). Never, never ; we shall go to law.

SCA. Reflect . . .

ARG. I shall go to law.

SCA. Do not throw yourself . . .

ARG. I shall go to law.

SCA. But to go to law, you want money. You must have money for the summons ; money for the registration ; money for the letter of attorney ; money for appearance, counsel, evidence, and solicitors' fees. Some will go for the consultations and the pleadings of the barristers ; for the right of redemption, and for engrossing copies of the case. You will want money for the reports of substitutes, for the sweetmeats at the end of the trial,¹³ for the registration of the verdict, the form of decree, sentence, arrests, revision, the signing and countersigning of their clerks, without reckoning the presents which you will

¹² This picture of the vexations of a lawsuit in Molière's time is not much exaggerated.

¹³ The original has *épices*, spices, because formerly those who had a lawsuit gave sweetmeats to the judges, to thank them for having gained their suit, and because spices were employed instead of sugar before India was discovered. These *épices*, which were at first voluntary, became afterwards a compulsory tax, which was paid in money.

have to make. Give this money to that man, and the affair is at end.

ARG. What ! two hundred pistoles !

SCA. Yes. You will be a gainer by it. I have made a little calculation, mentally, of all the law charges ; and I have found that by giving two hundred pistoles to your man, you will be the gainer by at least a hundred and fifty, without counting the anxiety, the going hither and thither, and the bother you shall save yourself. Were it for nothing else than to have to put up with the insults which those sorry waggish barristers say to one in public, I would sooner give three hundred pistoles than go to law.

ARG. I do not care for that, and I defy the lawyers to say anything against me.

SCA. You shall do as you please ; but if I were you, I should fight shy of law-suits.

ARG. I shall not give two hundred pistoles.

SCA. Here comes the very man we are speaking of. ¹⁴

SCENE IX.—ARGANTE, SCAPIN, SYLVESTER, *disguised as a swash-buckler.*

SYL. I say, Scapin, just show me this Argante, the father of Octave.

SCA. Why, Sir ?

SYL. I have just been told that he wishes to go to law with me, and by the law annul my sister's marriage.

SCA. I do not know if he intends to do so ; but he certainly does not consent to give the two hundred pistoles which you desire ; he says it is too much.

SYL. 'Sdeath, blood and wounds, ¹⁵ if I find him I shall thrash him unmercifully, were I to be racked on the wheel for it afterwards. (*Argante, for fear of being seen, stands trembling behind Scapin.*

SCA. Let me tell you, Sir, that this father of Octave has some courage, and will perhaps not be at all afraid of you.

¹⁴ This is again partly borrowed from Terence.

¹⁵ The original has *par la tête ! par la ventre !*

SYL. What! he? he? blood and thunder!¹⁶ if he were here, I would give him at once a taste of my sword in his belly. (*Perceiving Argante*). Who is this man?

SCA. It is not he, Sir; it is not he.

SYL. But perhaps it is one of his friends.

SCA. No, Sir; on the contrary, it is his greatest enemy.

SYL. His greatest enemy?

SCA. Yes.

SYL. Ah! forsooth! I am glad of it. (*To Argante*). Are you an enemy of this mean rascal of an Argante, Sir? Eh?

SCA. Yes, yes; I can answer for that.

SYL. (*Shaking Argante's hand violently*). Grasp it, shake hands. I give you my word and pledge you my honour, by the sword which I wear, by all the oaths which I could swear, that before the day is out I shall rid you of this ar-rant knave, this mean scoundrel of an Argante. Trust to me.

SCA. Violence is not tolerated in this country, Sir.

SYL. I do not care a rap, and I have nothing to lose.

SCA. He will be on his guard, you may depend; and he has got relatives, friends and servants, who will guard him against your resentment.

SYL. Zounds! that is all I ask, that is all that I ask for. (*Drawing his Sword*). Death and blood! Why is he not here with all his guard! Why does he not appear before me surrounded by thirty persons! Why does he not rush down upon me, arms in hand! (*Standing upon his guard*). Ah! you knaves, you have the audacity to attack me. Ah! Zounds! kill. (*Parrying on every side, as if he had several people to deal with*). No quarter! Advance. Stand firm. Push on! A sure foot, a quick eye. Ah! you scoundrels, you scum! that is what you want! You shall have plenty of it. Stand firm, you knaves, stand firm. Come on. Parry this thrust, and that one! (*Turning towards Scapin and Argante*). And this one. And that

¹⁶ The original has *par la sang, par la tête*. *Ventre* and *sang* are masculine, but here is understood *par la vertu de*, and the whole oath was *par la vertu du sang or du ventre de Dieu*. I have thought it needless to give a literal translation of these blasphemies.

one. What, you draw back! Stand firm, zounds, stand firm!¹⁷

SCA. Eh! eh! eh! Sir, we do not belong to them.

SYL. That will teach you to dare to meddle with me.

SCENE X.—ARGANTE, SCAPIN.

SCA. Well now! you see how many persons would be killed for two hundred pistoles. After this, I wish you good luck.

ARG. (*Trembling all over*). Scapin!

SCA. If you please?

ARG. I have made up my mind to give the two hundred pistoles.

SCA. I am glad of it for your sake.

ARG. Let us go and find him; I have got them with me.

SCA. You have only to hand them to me. You cannot, for your own honour, show yourself to him, after having passed in this place for some other person than you really are; and besides, I should fear that, revealing yourself to him, he might take it into his head to ask for more.

ARG. Yes; but I should be glad to see how I part with my money.

SCA. Do you mistrust me?

ARG. It is not that, but . . .

SCA. Forsooth, Sir, I am a rogue, I am, or an honest man; one of the two. Do you think I would deceive you, and that, in all this, I have aught else at heart than your interest and that of my master, to whom you wish to be allied? If you suspect me, I meddle no more with anything, and, from this moment, you may look for some one to arrange your affairs.

ARG. Take them.

SCA. No, Sir, do not intrust your money to me. I shall be very glad if you would employ some one else.¹⁸

ARG. Good Heavens! take it.

SCA. No, I tell you, do not trust yourself to me. Who knows but what I might wish to swindle you out of your money?

¹⁷ A similar scene has been employed by the actor and dramatist Rosimond, in his *Dupe in Love*, performed in 1670.

¹⁸ This is from Plautus' *Bacchis*.

ARG. Take it, I tell you : do not let me have to squabble any longer. But be sure to take good guarantees from him.

SCA. Let me manage it ; he has not a fool to deal with.

ARG. I shall wait for you at my house.

SCA. I shall not fail to be there. (*Alone*). That is one. I have only to look for the other. Ah ! upon my word, here he is. It seems that Providence brings them into my net, one after another.

SCENE XI.—GÉRONTE, SCAPIN.

SCA. (*Pretending not to see G ronte*). Oh Heavens ! Oh unlooked-for misfortune ! Oh wretched father ! Poor G ronte, what will you do ?

GER. (*Aside*). What is he saying about me, with that sorrowful face ?

SCA. Is there no one to tell me where I can find M. G ronte ?

GER. What is the matter, Scapin ?

SCA. (*Running about the stage, and pretending not to see nor hear G ronte*). Where can I find him, to tell him of this misfortune ?

GER. (*Stopping Scapin*). What is it ?

SCA. In vain do I run everywhere to find him.

GER. Here I am.

SCA. He must be hiding in some place which no one can discover.

GER. (*Stopping Scapin*). Hullo ! are you blind that you cannot see me ?

SCA. Oh ! Sir, I could not meet you anywhere.

GER. I have been standing in front of you for nearly an hour. What has happened ?

SCA. Sir . . .

GER. What ?

SCA. Your son, Sir . . .

GER. Well ! my son . . .

SCA. Has met with the strangest accident in the world.

GER. What is it ?

SCA. A short time ago I met him looking so very sad about something that you had told him, and in which you have unreasonably enough mixed up my name ; and trying

to raise his low spirits, we went to take a row in the harbour. There, amongst several other things, our eyes were attracted by a Turkish galley, tolerably well equipped. A young Turk with a pleasant face, invited us to come on board, and held out his hand to us. We went. He showed us a thousand civilities, offered us a lunch, where we ate the most excellent fruit that can be found, and drank the finest wine in the world.

GER. What is there so very grievous in all this?

SCA. Stay a minute, Sir, I am coming to it. While we were eating, he put the galley out to sea; and, finding himself far enough from the port, he had me put into a boat, and sent me to tell you that, if you do not send him through me, immediately, five hundred crowns, he will carry your son away to Algiers.

GER. What, the deuce! five hundred crowns!

SCA. Yes, Sir, and what is more, he has only given me two hours to find them.

GER. Ah! the gallows-bird of a Turk! to murder me in this manner.

SCA. It remains with you, Sir, to take prompt measures to save from slavery a son whom you so tenderly love.

GER. What the devil did he want in that galley?

SCA. He did not dream of what would happen.

GER. Go, Scapin, go quickly, and tell this Turk that I shall send the authorities after him.

SCA. The authorities on the open sea! do you wish to make fools of people?

GER. What the devil did he want in that galley?

SCA. An adverse fate often leads people.

GER. You must, Scapin, you must show yourself now a faithful servant.

SCA. How so, Sir?

GER. By going to tell this Turk to send me back my son, and by putting yourself in his place, until I can raise the sum which he asks.

SCA. Eh! Sir, do you know what you are saying? and do you imagine that this Turk will have so little sense as to receive a poor wretch like me as a substitute for your son?

GER. What the devil did he want in that galley?

SCA. He did not dream of such a misfortune. Remember, Sir, that he has given me only two hours.

GER. He wants, you say . . .

SCA. Five hundred crowns.

GER. Five hundred crowns! Has he no conscience?

SCA. That is good; a Turk a conscience!

GER. Does he know what five hundred crowns means?

SCA. Indeed he does, Sir; he knows that it is fifteen hundred livres.

GER. Does he think, the villain, that fifteen hundred livres are so easily to be found?

SCA. They are people who do not understand reason.

GER. But what the devil did he want in that galley?

SCA. True. But after all, one cannot foresee these things. Pray, Sir, make haste.

GER. Look here, there is the key of my cupboard.

SCA. Good.

GER. You go and open it.

SCA. Very good.

GER. You will find a large key on the left hand side, which is the one of the garret.

SCA. Yes.

GER. You will take all the clothes which are in that large basket, and go and sell them to the old clothes-men to redeem my son.

SCA. [*Handing him back the key*]. Are you dreaming, Sir? The whole of which you speak will not fetch a hundred francs; and besides, you know the little time he has given me.

GER. But what the devil did he want in that galley?

SCA. Oh! What a waste of words. Leave that galley alone, and remember that time flies, and that you run the risk of losing your son. Alas! my poor master! perhaps I shall never set eyes on you again while I live, and at this very moment they are carrying you away to Algiers as a slave. But Heaven is my witness that I have done all that I could for you, and that, if you are not bought off, nothing but the want of fatherly affection is to blame.

GER. Stay, Scapin, I will go and fetch that money.

SCA. Be quick about it, Sir; I tremble to hear the hour strike.

GER. Did you not say four hundred crowns?

SCA. No : five hundred crowns.

GER. Five hundred crowns !

SCA. Yes.

GER. What the devil did he want in that galley ?

SCA. You are right : but make haste.

GER. Was there no other place to go to ?

SCA. That is true : but be quick.

GER. Ah ! that confounded galley.

SCA. (*Aside*). That galley lies heavy upon his heart.

GER. Stay, Scapin, I did not remember, I have just received the very sum in gold, and I did not think that I would have to part with it so soon. (*Taking his purse from his pocket, and holding it out to Scapin*). There, go and redeem my son.

SCA. (*Holding out his hand*). Yes, Sir.

GER. (*Still holding the purse, which he pretends to give to Scapin*). But tell this Turk that he is a scoundrel.

SCA. (*Still holding out his hand*). Yes.

GER. (*Recommencing the same thing*). An infamous wretch.

SCA. (*Still holding out his hand*). Yes.

GER. A man without honour, a robber.

SCA. Let me manage it.

GER. That he extorts five hundred crowns from me against all right.

SCA. Yes.

GER. (*Recommencing the same thing*). That I do not make them a present to him for ever.

SCA. Very good.

GER. (*Recommencing the same thing*). And that, if ever I catch him, I shall be revenged on him.

SCA. Yes.

GER. (*Putting the money back in his pocket and going*). Go, go quickly, and bring back my son.

SCA. (*Running after G ronte*). Hullo, Sir.

GER. What ?

SCA. Where is this money ?

GER. Have I not given it to you ?

SCA. No, indeed ; you put it back in your pocket.

GER. Ah ! it is this trouble that upsets my senses.

SCA. I see it does.

GER. What the devil did he want in that galley? Confounded galley! Villain of a Turk; may the devil take you!

SCA. (*Alone*). He cannot swallow the five hundred crowns which I have dragged away from him; but he is not quits with me yet; and he shall pay me in different coin for the trick he has played me with his son.¹⁹

SCENE XII.—OCTAVE, LEANDER, SCAPIN.

OCT. Well! Scapin, have you succeeded in your enterprise for me?

LEA. Have you done anything to get my love affair out of the plight it is in?

SCA. (*To Octave*). Here are two hundred pistoles which I have drawn from your father.

OCT. Ah! how glad you make me!

SCA. (*To Leander*). I have not been able to do anything for you.

LEA. (*Going*). I had better go and make an end of myself; for I cannot live if Zerbinette is taken from me.

SCA. Hullo! hullo! gently. What a dreadful hurry you are in!

LEA. (*Turning back*). What is to become of me?

SCA. Never mind, I have got what you want.

LEA. (*Returning*). Ah! you restore life to me.

SCA. But on condition that you shall allow me a little piece of retaliation upon your father for the trick which he has played me.

LEA. Anything you please.

SCA. You promise it before a witness?

LEA. Yes.

SCA. Catch hold, here are the five hundred crowns.

LEA. Let us go quickly to redeem my charmer with them.

¹⁹ In the Introductory Notice I have already stated that this scene is borrowed from Cyrano de Bergerac's play *The Deceived Pedant*, where a Turkish galley is lying at anchor in the Seine. Molière's comedy takes place on a coast which was exposed to the attacks of Turkish rovers; besides, the taking of Candia by the Turks, in 1669, had given a fresh interest to all adventures with which Turks were mixed up.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—ZERBINETTE, HYACINTHE, SCAPIN,
SYLVESTER.

SYL. Yes, your lovers have decided between them, that you should remain together; and we are discharging the order which they have given us.

HYA. (*To Zerbinette*). Such an order has nothing but what is very agreeable to me. I gladly welcome such a companion; and it will not be my fault if the friendship existing between the persons whom we love does not extend to us.

ZER. I accept the proposal, and am not one to draw back when friendship is in question.

SCA. And when love is in question?

ZER. As for love, that is a different thing; one runs a little more risk, and I am not so rash about that.

SCA. You are so against my master now, I believe; and what he has just done for you ought to give you the heart to respond in the right manner to his love.

ZER. I do not as yet trust him unconditionally; and all that he has done does not entirely reassure me. I am of a lively disposition, and I am always laughing: but for all that, I am serious upon certain subjects; and your master will make a mistake, if he thinks that to have bought me is sufficient to make me wholly his own. It will cost him something else besides money; and if he wishes that I should return his passion in the same manner, he will have to give me a pledge of his faith, accompanied by certain ceremonies which are thought indispensable.

SCA. That is what he means to do. His intentions are nought but right and honourable; and I would not have been the one to meddle with this affair if he had had different intentions.

ZER. That is what I wish to believe, since you tell me so; but, on the father's part, I expect some obstacles.

SCA. We shall find the means of arranging matters.

HYA. (*To Zerbinette*). The similarity of our positions ought to contribute to the growth of our friendship; and we find ourselves both in the same plight, both exposed to the same misfortunes.

ZER. You have this advantage at least that you know who gave you birth, and that the support of your parents, whom you can disclose, is likely to arrange everything, to assure your happiness, and to command a consent to a marriage which is already contracted. But, as for me, I receive no assistance from my position in life; and I am in a condition which will hardly mollify a father who looks only to wealth.

HYA. You have yet the advantage, that your lover is not tempted by another match.

ZER. The change in a lover's heart is not what is most to be feared. One may naturally believe one's own merits sufficient to retain one's conquests; and what I dread most in this sort of affairs, is the paternal power, in whose eyes merit counts for nothing.

HYA. Alas! why must our best affections be thwarted! How sweet it is to love, when there are no obstacles to those gentle chains with which two hearts are united!

SCA. You are jesting; a smooth love affair is a disagreeable calm. An uninterrupted happiness becomes tiresome; there must be ups and downs in life; and the difficulties about things awaken the desires, and increase the pleasures.

ZER. By the bye, Scapin, tell us the story, which I have been given to understand is so amusing, of the trick which you made use of to draw money from your old miser. You know that it is not labour lost to tell me a tale, and that I reward it well enough by the pleasure which it gives me.

SCA. There is Sylvester, who will manage it as well as I. I have got a little bit of revenge in my mind, of which I shall relish the pleasure.

SYL. Why will you, out of mere light-heartedness, get yourself into awkward scrapes?

SCA. I like to attempt hazardous enterprises.

SYL. I have already told you, if you take my advice, to abandon your project.

SCA. Just so; but I shall take my own advice in this matter.

SYL. What the devil are you going to be up to?

SCA. What the devil are you bothering yourself about?

SYL. Because I see that you are running, unnecessarily, the risk of drawing a storm of cudgel-blows upon you.

SCA. Well! It is at the cost of my back, not of yours.

SYL. It is true that you are master of your own shoulders, and may dispose of them as you please.

SCA. That kind of danger has never stopped me; and I hate those chicken-hearted fellows, who, because they look too much at the sequel of events, never dare to undertake anything.

ZER. (*To Scapin*). We shall need your help.

SCA. Lead on. I shall be with you presently. It shall never be said, that they have with impunity almost made me betray myself and disclose secrets which it would be as well that nobody knew.

SCENE II.—GÉRONTE, SCAPIN.

GER. Well, Scapin, how goes the affair of my son?

SCA. Your son is safe enough, Sir; but you yourself, Sir, are running the greatest danger in the world, and I would give a good deal that you were in your own house.

GER. How is that?

SCA. At this very moment, you are looked for everywhere to be killed.

GER. I?

SCA. Yes.

GER. And by whom?

SCA. By the brother of this person whom Octave has married. He believes that the design which you have to place your daughter in the position now occupied by his sister, is the reason which induces Argante to leave no stone unturned to annul their marriage; and, with that idea, he has openly resolved to vent his despair on you, and to take your life to avenge his honour. All his friends, knights of the blade like himself, are looking for you everywhere, and inquiring after you. I myself saw here and there some soldiers of his company, who are guarding in platoons every approach to your house, examining every one whom they meet: so much so that you cannot go home, nor walk a step, right or left, without falling into their hands.

GER. What am I to do, my good Scapin?

SCA. I do not know, Sir; it is a strange affair altogether. I tremble from head to foot for you, and . . .

Wait a moment (*Scapin pretends to look at the farther end of the stage whether any one is there.*

GER. (*Trembling*). Eh?

SCA. (*Coming back*). No, no, no, it is nothing.

GER. Cannot you find some means to get me out of trouble?

SCA. I have thought about one; but I run the risk of being knocked down myself.

GER. Come! Scapin, show yourself a faithful servant. Do not leave me in the lurch, I beg of you.

SCA. I am willing enough. I have this much regard for you, that I should not like to leave you without assistance.

GER. You shall be well rewarded for it, I assure you; and I promise you this coat, when I have worn it a little.

SCA. Stay. Just the very thing I have hit upon to save you. You must get into this sack, and . . .

GER. (*Fancying he sees somebody*). Ah!

SCA. No, no, no, no, there is no one. You must, I say, get into this, and take care not to stir in the least. I shall hoist you on my back like a bundle of something, and I shall carry you in that way through the midst of your enemies, into your house, where, once we get in, we can barricade ourselves, and send for assistance against this violence.

GER. The idea is good.

SCA. The best in the world. You shall see. (*Aside*). I shall be even with you for the cheat.

GER. What do you say?

SCA. I say that your enemies will be taken in nicely. Get well to the bottom; and above all take care not to show yourself, and not to move, happen what may.

GER. Let me manage: I know how to keep myself . . .

SCA. Hide yourself; here comes a swash-buckler who is looking out for you (*disguising his voice*). "What! shall I not have the delight of killing this G ronte, and will no one out of charity point me out where he is?" (*To G ronte in his natural voice*). Do not stir. "Cad dis! I shall find him if he were hidden in the bowels of the earth." (*To G ronte in his natural voice*). Do not show yourself. (*The counterfeited language is supposed to be*

Gascon, the remainder his own).²⁰ Ah! you man with the sack." Sir. "I will give you a louis if you tell me where I can find this G ronte." You are looking for M. G ronte? "Yes. Zounds, I am looking for him." And what for, Sir? "What for?" Yes. "Because I want to cudgel the life out of him, cad dis." Oh, indeed, Sir; but folks like him do not ordinarily receive cudgel-blows, and he is not a man to stand that sort of treatment. "Who? that booby of a G ronte, that scoundrel, that blockhead?" M. G ronte, Sir, is neither a booby, nor a scoundrel, nor a blockhead; and you ought to speak in another tone. "How dare you give me any of your insolence?" I am defending, as I ought to do, a man of honour, who is being insulted. "Are you one of the friends of this G ronte?" Yes, Sir, I am. "Ah! cad dis, you are one of his friends. So much the better." (*Striking several times on the sack with a stick*). "There, take this, and that, in his stead." (*Shrieking as if he were being struck*). Ah, ah, Sir, that'll do. Ah, ah, Sir, gently. Ah, gently. Ah, ah, ah. "There, give him this from me. Adiusias." (*Complaining and moving his back as if he had received some cudgel-blows*). Ah, the devil take the Gascon! Ah!

GER. (*Thrusting his head out of the sack*). Ah, Scapin, I can endure it no longer.

SCA. Ah! Sir, I am bruised all over, and my shoulders pain me dreadfully.

GER. How is that! It is on mine that he has been beating.

SCA. No, indeed, Sir, it is my back that he has been pummelling.

GER. What do you mean? I have felt the blows well enough, and feel them yet.

SCA. No, I tell you; it is only the end of his stick that came down upon your shoulders.

GER. You ought therefore to have gone a little farther away in order to spare me . . .

²⁰ The words printed in italics are in the Gascon dialect, which is untranslatable. Here is a specimen of the first sentence in the original: *Cad dis, j  le trouverai, s  cah t-il au centre d  la terre.*

SCA. (*Pushing his head back again into the sack*). Be careful; here comes another, who has the look of a stranger. (*This by-play is the same as that of the Gascon, for the change of language and the stage-business*).²¹ "Gone, I have been running like a Basque, and I cannot find this devil of a G ronte." Hide yourself well. "Tell me a little, you mister Gentleman, if you please, do not you know where this G ronte is, whom I am looking for?" No, Sir, I do not know where G ronte is. "Tell me candidly; I do not want much with him. I only want to treat him to a dozen or so of cudgel-blows on his back, and three or four sword thrusts through his breast." I assure you Sir, that I do not know where he is. "It seems to me that there is something moving in this sack." Not at all, Sir. "I am sure that there is something in there." Not at all, Sir. "I have a good mind to pass my sword through this sack." Oh! Sir, do not do anything of the sort. "Let me look a little what is in there." That will do, Sir. "How, that will do!" You have no business with what I am carrying. "And I will have business with it." You shall not see it. "Ah! what nonsense is all this." They are some clothes belonging to me. "Show me, I tell you." I shall do nothing of the kind. "You shall do nothing of the kind?" No. "Then I shall break this stick on your shoulders." I do not care for that. "Ah you want to play the fool with me." (*Striking the sack with the stick, and howling as if he were receiving the blows*). Aye, aye, aye. Ah! Sir, ah, ah, ah, ah. "Till we meet again, this will be a little lesson to teach you not to be insolent." Ah! plague on the jabbering thief! Ah!

GER. (*Thrusting his head out of the sack*). Ah! I feel as broken on the wheel.

SCA. Ah! I am dead.

GER. Why the deuce must they pummel my back?

SCA. (*Putting his head back into the sack*). Take care;

²¹ My foregoing remark as to the difficulty of rendering provincial dialect into English applies also to this scene, which is given in an Alsatian accent. Here is the first sentence in the original: *Parti! moi courir comme une Basque, et moi ne p uvre point trouf ir de tout le jour sti ti ble de G ronte.*

here is half a dozen soldiers together. (*Imitating the voices of several persons*). "Come let us try to find G ronte, let us look everywhere. Do not let us stand still over it. Let us rummage the whole town. Do not let us miss a single spot. Let us go everywhere. Let us peep into every nook and corner. Which way shall we go? This way. No, through here. To the left. To the right. Not at all. Yes, yes." (*To G ronte, in his natural voice*). Hide yourself well. "Ah, mates, here is his servant. Come, you rascal, you must tell us where your master is." Ah! gentlemen, do not ill-use me. "Come, tell us where he is. Speak. Make haste, look sharp, be quick, speak up." Oh, gentlemen, gently. (*G ronte, thrusts his head softly out of the sack, and becomes aware of Scapin's trick*). "If you do not help us to find your master directly, we shall overwhelm you with cudgel-blows." I prefer suffering everything rather than show you my master. "We shall beat the life out of you." Do as you please. "You wish to be cudgelled?" I will not betray my master. "Ah, you wish to be beaten? There then . . ." Ah! (*As he is about to strike, G ronte gets out of the sack, and Scapin runs off*).

GER. (*Alone*). Ah! infamous wretch! Ah! traitor! Ah! scoundrel! Is it thus that you assault me?

SCENE III.—ZERBINETTE, G RONTE.

ZER. (*Laughing, without perceiving G ronte*). Ha, ha! I must have a breath of air.

GER. (*Aside, without seeing Zerbinette*). You shall pay for this, I swear.

ZER. (*Without seeing G ronte*). Ha, ha, ha, ha! What an amusing story! and what a dupe they have made of the old man!

GER. There is nothing amusing in it; and you have no business to laugh at it.

ZER. What is the matter! what do you mean, Sir?

GER. I mean that you have no business to make a jest of me.

ZER. Of you?

GER. Yes.

ZER. How? Who intends to make a jest of you?

GER. Why do you come here to laugh in my very face?

ZER. This does not concern you at all, and I was only laughing at a story that I have just been told, the funniest I ever heard. I do not know whether it is because I am interested in the matter; but I have never heard anything more laughable than the trick that has just been played by a son on his father to get hold of some money.

GER. By a son on his father to get hold of some money?

ZER. Yes. If you are at all curious, you shall find me ready enough to tell you the tale; for I am always itching to retail the stories I know.

GER. Pray tell me this one.

ZER. I do not mind. I shall not risk much by telling it to you, and it is an adventure that will not long remain a secret. Fate would have it that I should fall among a gang of people whom they call gipsies, and who, wandering from one country to another, make it their business to tell people's fortunes, and to do many things besides. On reaching this town, a young man happened to see me, and conceived an attachment to me. From that moment, he dogged my footsteps; and at first he was like all other young men, who think that they have only to speak, and that at the least word which they say to us, their business is done; but he found a resistance which made him somewhat alter his first opinions. He confided his passion to the people in whose hands I was; and he found them willing to leave me to him, in consideration of a certain sum of money. But the worst of the thing was, that my lover was in the same position in which we so often find the majority of young men of good birth, that is, he was a little short of money. His father, though rich, is a downright skinflint, the nastiest wretch on earth. Wait a little. Can I not remember his name? Stop. Perhaps you can help me. Can not you name some one in this town, who is noted for being miserly to the last degree?

GER. No.

ZER. There is a son in his name . . . route . . . Or . . . Oronte. No. Gé . . . Géronte. Yes, Géronte, that is it; that is my shabby individual; I have got it; that is the stingy churl of whom I am talking. To come to our story, our people wished to get away from this

town to-day; and my lover was going to lose me for lack of money, had he not luckily been assisted by the cleverness of his servant to get some out of his father. As for the name of the servant, I know it perfectly well. It is Scapin; he is a wonderful fellow, and he deserves all the praise in the world.

GER. (*Aside*). Ah! scoundrel that you are!

ZER. This is the trick of which he made use to get the money out of his dupe. Ha, ha, ha, ha! I cannot help laughing heartily when I think of it. Ha, ha, ha, ha! He goes to this stingy cur . . . ha, ha, ha; and tells him that while walking with his son near the port, hi, hi, they saw a Turkish galley, on board of which they were invited; that a young Turk offered them a lunch. Ha; that while they were at table, the galley was put off to sea, and that the Turk had sent him back ashore by himself in a skiff, with the order to tell his master's father that he was going to carry his son away to Algiers with him unless he sent him five hundred crowns immediately. Ha, ha, ha! Behold my churl, my miser, in the most furious agonies; and the tenderness for his son struggling curiously with his avarice. The five hundred crowns required of him are just so many dagger thrusts levelled at his heart. Ha, ha, ha. He cannot make up his mind to tear that sum from his very bowels; and the pain which he suffers makes him devise a hundred ridiculous ways of getting his son back again. Ha, ha, ha. He wants to send the authorities after the Turk's galley on the open sea. Ha, ha, ha. He induces his servant to go and offer himself to take the son's place, until he has scraped together the money which he does not intend to part with. Ha, ha, ha. In order to make up the five hundred crowns, he is going to sell four or five old suits which are not worth thirty. Ha, ha, ha. The servant tries at every turn to show him the preposterousness of his proposal; and every reflection is dolefully accompanied by a What the devil did he want in that galley? Oh! confounded galley! scoundrel of a Turk! At last after many twistings and turnings, after having wailed and sighed ever so long . . . But it seems to me that my story does not amuse you; what do you think of it?

GER. I think that the young man is a hangdog, an insolent scoundrel, who shall be punished by his father for the trick he has played him; that the gipsy is a jade, an impertinent girl, to insult a man of honour who will teach her to come here and corrupt young men of quality; and that the servant is a rascal who will be sent to the gallows by G ron te before to-morrow.²²

SCENE IV.—ZERBINETTE, SYLVESTER.

SYL. Where did you go to? Are you aware that you have been talking to the father of your lover?

ZER. I just thought so; and, inadvertently, I have been telling him his own story.

SYL. How, his own story?

ZER. Yes. I was full of the tale, and bursting to tell it again. But what does it matter? So much the worse for him. I do not see that things, so far as we are concerned, can be mended or marred by it.

SYL. You had a great mind to chatter; and I call it talking with a vengeance not to be able to keep one's own secrets.

ZER. Would he not have found it out from some one else?

SCENE V.—ARGANTE, ZERBINETTE, SYLVESTER.

ARG. (*Behind the scenes*). Hullo! Sylvester.

SYL. Go indoors. Here is my master calling me.

SCENE VI.—ARGANTE, SYLVESTER.

ARG. So you have put your heads together, you rascals; you have arranged between you, Scapin, you and my son, to cheat me; and you think that I shall bear it?

SYL. Look here, Sir, if Scapin cheats you, I wash my hands of it, and assure you that I have no part nor parcel in it.

ARG. We shall see about this business, you rogue; we

²² This scene is also partly imitated from *The Deceived Pedant* of Cyrano de Bergerac; but in the latter play, the lady, Genev te, in relating the story to the pedant Granger, knows that he was the hero of it; whilst Zerbinette does not know G ron te.

shall see about this, and I do not wish to be treated like a goose.²³

SCENE VII.—GÉRONTE, ARGANTE, SYLVESTER.

GER. Ah! M. Argante, you behold me overwhelmed with disgrace.

ARG. You behold me also in a terrible affliction.

GER. That hangdog Scapin, by one of his roguish tricks, has swindled me out of five hundred crowns.

ARG. That same hangdog Scapin, by a similar roguish trick, has swindled me out of five hundred pistoles.

GER. Not content with doing me out of five hundred crowns, he has treated me in a manner which I am ashamed to tell you. But he shall pay me for it.

ARG. He shall have to give me satisfaction for the trick he has played me.

GER. And I mean to be signally revenged upon him.

SYL. (*Aside*). Would to Heaven that I had not had a share in all this!

GER. But this is not all, M. Argante; and one misfortune is generally the fore-runner of another. I was rejoicing to-day in the prospect of having my daughter, who is my only consolation, with me, and now I have just heard from my man that she set out a good while ago from Tarente, and that it is thought that she went down with the vessel in which she embarked.

ARG. But why, pray, did you keep her at Tarente, and not give yourself the pleasure of having her always with you?

GER. I had my reasons for this; and family interests have obliged me until now to keep my second marriage a great secret. But whom do I see?

SCENE VIII.—ARGANTE, GÉRONTE, NÉRINE, SYLVESTER.

GER. What, you here, nurse?

NER. (*Throwing herself at the feet of G ron te*). Ah, M. Pandolphe . . .

²³ The original has *je ne  tends pas qu'on me fasse passer la plume par le bec*; because, in order to prevent geese from going through the hedges, a feather is stuck through the upper part of their beaks.

GER. Call me G ron te, and do not use this name any longer. The reasons no longer exist which obliged me to take it among you at Tarente.

NER. Alas ! what troubles and uneasiness this change of name has caused us in the pains which we took to find you out here !

GER. Where is my daughter and her mother ?

NER. Your daughter, Sir, is not far from this ; but before I let you see her, I must beg your pardon for having married her, in the destitute condition in which I was with her, through not finding you.

GER. My daughter married ?

NER. Yes, Sir.

GER. And to whom ?

NER. To a young gentleman named Octave, son of a certain M. Argante.

GER. Oh, Heavens !

ARG. What a coincidence !

GER. Take us, take us quickly to her.

NER. You have only to enter this house.

GER. Lead the way. Follow me, follow me, M. Argante.

SYL. (*Alone*). This is an adventure which is altogether surprising.²⁴

SCENE IX.—SCAPIN, SYLVESTER.

SCA. Well, Sylvester, what are our folks doing ?

SYL. I have two pieces of news to tell you. The one is, that the affair of Octave is arranged. Our Hyacinthe is found to be the daughter of M. G ron te ; and chance has accomplished what the prudence of the fathers had planned. The other piece of news is, that the two old men are threatening Heaven and earth against you ; and above all M. G ron te.

SCA. That is nothing. Threats have never done me any harm ; and they are clouds that pass very high over our heads.

SYL. Take care of yourself. The sons may make it up with the fathers, and you be left in the lurch.

²⁴ This ending again is partly followed from the last scene of Terence's *Phormio*.

SCA. Let me manage. I shall find the means of appeasing their anger, and . . .

SYL. Get away, they are coming out.

SCENE. X.—GÉRONTE, ARGANTE, HYACINTHE, ZERBINETTE, NÉRINE, SYLVESTER.

GER. Come, daughter, come home to me. My joy would have been complete, if I could have seen your mother with you.

ARG. Here comes Octave, just in time.

SCENE XI.—ARGANTE, GÉRONTE, OCTAVE, HYACINTHE, ZERBINETTE, NÉRINE, SYLVESTER.

ARG. Come, my son; come and rejoice with us in the happy accident of your marriage. Heaven . . .

OCT. No, father, all your proposals of marriage will be useless. I must take off the mask with you, and you have been told of my engagement.

ARG. Yes, but you do not know . . .

OCT. I know all which I ought to know.

ARG. I wish to tell you that the daughter of M. Géronte . . .

OCT. The daughter of M. Géronte will never be anything to me.

GER. It is she . . .

OCT. (*To Géronte*). No, Sir; I ask your pardon; my resolutions are taken.

SYL. (*To Octave*). Listen . . .

OCT. No. Hold your tongue. I shall listen to nothing.

ARG. (*To Octave*). Your wife . . .

OCT. No, I tell you, father; I shall sooner die than leave my gentle Hyacinthe. (*Crossing the stage to place himself at the side of Hyacinthe*). Yes, you may do what you like; here she is, to whom my troth is plighted. I shall love her all my life, and do not want another wife.

ARG. Very well! it is she whom we give to you. What devil of a madcap who always goes ahead!

HYA. (*Pointing to Géronte*). Yes, Octave, here is my father, whom I have found: and all our troubles are ended.

GER. Let us go home ; we shall be more comfortable than here to discuss matters.

HYA. (*Pointing to Zerbinette*). Ah ! father ; I ask you as a favour that I may not be parted from this amiable girl whom you see. Her merits will make you like her, when you come to know her.

GER. Would you have me harbour a person with whom your brother is in love, and who just now has insulted me to my very face?

ZER. I beg of you to excuse me, Sir. I should not have spoken so, had I known that it was you ; and I only knew you by hearsay.

GER. How ! only by hearsay?

HYA. Father, the passion which my brother has for her has nothing guilty in it, and I answer for her virtue.

GER. That is very good. Would you not have me marry my son to her? A strange girl, whose profession is to run about the country.

SCENE XII.—ARGANTE, GÉRONTE, LEANDER, OCTAVE, HYACINTHE, ZERBINETTE, NÉRINE, SYLVESTER.

LEA. Father, do not complain any longer that I love a stranger, without birth or riches. Those of whom I have bought her have just disclosed to me that she belongs to this town, and comes of an honourable family, from whom they kidnapped her at the age of four : and here is a bracelet which they have given me, and which may help us to find her parents.

ARG. Alas ! to see this bracelet, it must be my daughter, whom I lost at the age you mention.

GER. Your daughter?

ARG. Yes, it is she ; and I see in every one of her features the certainty of it. My dear daughter ! . . .

HYA. Good Heavens ! what extraordinary adventures !

SCENE XIII.—ARGANTE, GÉRONTE, LEANDER, OCTAVE, HYACINTHE, ZERBINETTE, NÉRINE, SYLVESTER, CARLOS.

CAR. Alas ! gentlemen, a strange accident has just now happened.

GER. What is it?

CAR. Poor Scapin . . .

GER. Is a scoundrel, whom I shall have hanged.

CAR. Alas, Sir! you will not have the trouble. In passing by a house they were building, there fell on his head a stone-mason's hammer, which has broken the bone and laid bare the whole of his brain. He is dying, and he has begged to be brought here, to be able to speak to you before he dies.

ARG. Where is he?

CAR. Here he comes.

SCENE XIV.—ARGANTE, GÉRONTE, LEANDER, OCTAVE,
HYACINTHE, ZERBINETTE, NÉRINE, SCAPIN,
SYLVESTER, CARLOS.

SCA. (*Carried by two men, his head wrapt round with bandages, as if he had been wounded*). Aye, aye, gentlemen, behold me . . . Aye, you see me in a sad condition. Aye. I did not wish to die before having asked forgiveness of every one whom I may have offended. Aye. Yes, gentlemen, before breathing my last sigh, I beseech you with all my heart, to forgive me for all I may have done to you; but particularly M. Argante, and M. Geronte. Aye.

ARG. As for me, I forgive you; go, die in peace.

SCA. (*To Geronte*). It is you, Sir, whom I have offended most by the cudgel-blows, which . . .

GER. Speak no longer of it, I forgive you also.

SCA. It was a great audacity on my part, those cudgel-blows, which . . .

GER. Let us drop that.

SCA. Now that I am dying, it gives me inconceivable pain to think about those cudgel-blows which . . .

GER. Good Heaven! hold your tongue.

SCA. Those unlucky cudgel-blows which I . . .

GER. Hold your tongue, I tell you; I forget everything.

SCA. Alas! what goodness! but is it heartily, Sir, that you forgive me those cudgel-blows which I . . .

GER. Ah! yes. Let us speak no more about them: I forgive you everything: there is an end of it.

SCA. Oh Sir, I feel altogether relieved by that word.

GER. Yes; but I forgive you only on condition that you shall die.

SCA. How! Sir?

GER. I retract my word, if you recover.

SCA. Aye, aye. There is my faintness coming on again.

ARG. M. Géronte, in return for our joy, you must forgive him unconditionally.

GER. Be it so.

ARG. Let us all go and sup together, the better to relish our pleasure.

SCA. And let them carry me to the foot of the table, while I am waiting for my death.

LA COMTESSE D'ESCARBAGNAS.

COMEDIE.

THE COUNTESS OF ESCARBAGNAS.

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT.

(THE ORIGINAL IN PROSE.)

DECEMBER 2D, 1671.



INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

WE have already stated that during the rejoicing of the second marriage of Monsieur, the brother of Louis. XIV., with the Princess Charlotte Elizabeth of Bavaria, the King had given some splendid festivals for the reception of his sister-in-law, in which several comedies and ballets were performed, which were called *Ballet des ballets*.¹ Molière was commanded to write a comedy in which all the different entertainments, opera and ballets, should be combined; and hence he wrote *The Countess of Escarbagnas*, which was represented before the Court at Saint-Germain-en-Laye on the 2d of December, 1671. There was a prologue and a pastoral, the whole forming seven acts, each followed by an interlude. The prologue and interludes were taken from pieces formerly composed for the Court, such as *The Magnificent Lovers*, *George Dandin*, *The Citizen who apes the Nobleman*, and the *Ballet of the Muses*: but it is not known what these seven acts were, which are mentioned in the official book of the ballet.

The Countess of Escarbagnas represents nearly all provincials, inhabitants of small towns, with the habits and manners of country louts. The Countess is not a high-born lady, but the widow of some petty nobleman. She has been only a short time at Court, but has picked up sufficient wickedness to allow M. Harpin, one of her three admirers, to pay for the expenses of her household and her tradesmen. The receiver of taxes knows, of course, the power of money, and is therefore not so obsequious to birth as the gentle, gallant counsellor-at-law. He shows, on the contrary, his purse-proud vulgarity, and at the same time a certain shrewdness, whilst M. Tibaudier spends his time in writing rubbish, and in mixing law words with his elegant and pretentious phraseology, but in such a way as not to offend the noble widow. M. Bobinet is a representative of that class who are obliged, through necessity, to teach, and whose lot, I am afraid, has not much improved since the days of Molière. Even the servants have a distinct physiognomy; and as we perceive that all these persons move, live, and stand out from the canvass,—and that in one act—we recognize the masterhand of Molière.

¹ See Introductory Notice to *Psyché*.

The Countess of Escarbagnas was represented in the theatre of the Palais Royal, on the 8th of July, 1672, and was performed fourteen consecutive times, always with *The Compulsory Marriage*, which seems to have taken the place of the Court entertainments. It was never printed during Molière's lifetime, and appeared for the first time only in the edition of 1682, published by La Grange and Vinot.

James Miller has imitated a short dialogue between the Countess and Andrée in *The Man of Taste* (see Introductory Notice to *The Pretentious Young Ladies*, Vol. I.,) and between the Countess and Criquet.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE COUNT, *son of the Countess of Escarbagnas.*

THE VISCOUNT, *Julia's lover.*

MR. TIBAUDIER, *counsellor-at-law, in love with the Countess.*

MR. HARPIN, *receiver of taxes, also in love with the Countess.*

MR. ROBINET, *tutor to the Count.*

JEANNOT, *Tibaudier's lacquey.*

CRICQUET, *the Countess's lacquey.*

THE COUNTESS OF ESCARBAGNAS.

JULIA, *in love with the Viscount.*

ANDRÉE, *attendant to the Countess.*

THE SCENE IS AT ANGOULEME.

THE COUNTESS OF ESCARBAGNAS.

(*LA COMTESSE D'ESCARBAGNAS*).

SCENE I.—JULIA, THE VISCOUNT.

VIS. Eh what, Madam! you are here already!

JUL. Yes. You ought to blush for it, Cléante; and it is not at all gallant in a lover to be the last at the trysting place.

VIS. I should have been here an hour ago, if there were no bores in the world; and I have been stopped on the road by an old troublesome nobleman, who expressly asked me for tidings from the court, in order to tell me some, the most extravagant that could well be retailed; and these great newsmongers, who look about everywhere to spread the stories which they pick up, are, as you know, the plagues of small towns. This one has, first of all, shown me two sheets of paper, scribbled up to the edge with a large mass of nonsensical stories, which, he told me, came from the most reliable sources. After which, as a great curiosity, he has read me in a tiresome way, and with an air of great mystery, all the bad jokes of the Dutch *Gazette*,² the interests of which he has espoused. His opinion is that France is battered down by the pen of this writer; and that it only wants this wit to undo all our troops; and from this he has thrown himself headlong into

² Louis XIV. had just succeeded in dissolving the triple alliance between England, Sweden, and the United Provinces; hence the bitterness of the Dutch newspapers, which was one of the excuses which the French king brought forward to justify the war with Holland.

reviewing the ministry, whose every shortcoming he noticed ; and with which, I thought, he would never have finished. To hear him speak, he knows the secrets of the cabinet better than those who make them. The policy of the state allows him to see all its designs ; and it moves not a step, of which he cannot fathom the motives. He informs us of the hidden springs of everything that is done, lays bare to us the prudential views of our neighbours, and sets agoing, at his own fancy, all the affairs of Europe. His information extends even to Africa and Asia ; and he is informed of everything that is going on in the council of state of Prester-John³ and of the great Mogul.

JUL. You adorn your excuse in the best way you can, in order to make it agreeable, and to have it more easily accepted.

VIS. This is, fair Julia, the true cause of my being behind ; and, if I wish to give a gallant excuse, I should only have to tell you that the place of meeting which you have selected might authorize the delay with which you reproach me ; that to induce me to play the lover of the mistress of the house, is to make me fear of being here the first ; that this feint to which I constrain myself being only to please you, I am induced not to wish to suffer the annoyance of it, except in the presence of her who is amused by it ; that I avoid the *tete-a-tete* with this ridiculous Countess, with whom you hamper me ; and, in one word, that, coming here but for you, I have all the reasons possible to await until you are here.

JUL. We well know that you are never wanting in wit, wherewith to give nice colours to the faults which you may commit. If, however, you had come half-an-hour earlier, we would have profited by all these moments ; for on my arrival, I found that the Countess had gone out, and I do not doubt that she has gone into town to plume herself upon the comedy which you give me in her name.

VIS. But in all earnest, Madam, when will you put an end to this annoyance, and make me buy less dearly the happiness of seeing you ?

³ Prester John was a fabulous King of Teneduc, or, according to others, of Ethiopia.

JUL. When our parents shall be able to agree ; I dare not hope such a thing. You know, as well as I do, that the dissensions of our families do not allow us to see each other elsewhere, and that my brothers, as well as your father, are not sufficiently reasonable to sanction our attachment.

VIS. But why not take more advantage of the place of meeting which their animosity still leaves open to us ; and oblige me to lose in a silly feint the moments which I spend with you ?

JUL. The better to hide our love ; and again, to tell you the truth, this feint of which you speak is a very pleasant comedy to me ; and I do not know whether the one you are going to give us to-day will amuse me better. Our Countess of Escarbagnas, with her perpetual hobby of quality, is as good a character as one could put on the stage. The little excursion which she has made to Paris has brought her back to Angoulême more perfect than she was. The proximity of the court-air has given new charms to her absurdity, and her silliness does but grow and become more beautiful every day.

VIS. Yes ; but you do not consider that the sport which amuses you keeps my heart on the rack, and that one is not able to enjoy this very long, when there is so serious a passion in one's mind as the one which I feel for you. It is cruel, fair Julia, to let this amusement rob my love of moments which it would employ in expressing its ardour to you ; and, this night, I have made some verses upon the subject, which I cannot refrain from reciting to you, without your asking for them, so much is the eagerness of reading one's works a vice inseparable from the condition of a poet !

Too long, Iris, have you put me to the torture ;

Iris, as you perceive, is put there for Julia.

Too long, Iris, have you put me to the torture,
And if I obey your laws, I blame them silently
For forcing me to conceal the torment which I endure,
To confess a pain which I do not feel.

Must your fair eyes, to which I yield my arms,
Amuse themselves with my sad sighs?
And is it not enough that I should suffer for your charms,
Without making me also suffer for your pleasures?

This double martyrdom is too much at one time;
And what I am to keep silent, and what I am to utter,
Exercises equal cruelty on my heart.

Love sets it on fire, restraint kills it;
And if by pity you are not overcome,
I die both by the feint and by the truth.

JUL. I see that you make yourself out to be more ill-treated than you are; but to tell falsehoods wantonly, to attribute to their mistresses cruelties which they do not feel, is a license which gentlemen poets take, to accommodate themselves to the ideas with which they may be inspired. I should, however, be very glad, if you would give me these verses in writing.

VIS. It is enough to have recited them to you, and I must stop at that. It is allowed to be sometimes foolish enough to make verses, but not to wish to have them looked at.

JUL. It is useless to screen yourself behind a mock-modesty; the world knows that you have wit; and I do not see any reason why you should conceal yours.

VIS. For Heaven's sake! Madam, let us carefully pass over this, if you please; in this world it is dangerous to meddle with having wit. There is a certain ridicule attached to this which one catches easily, and some of our friends make me fear their example.

JUL. Good Heavens! Cléante, you may say what you like. I see for all this that you are dying to give them to me; and I would embarrass you if I pretended not to care for them.

VIS. I, Madam! you are jesting; do not believe that I am so much of a poet as to . . . But here comes our Countess of Escarbagnas. I am leaving by the other door so as not to meet her, and am going to prepare all my people for the entertainment which I have promised you.

SCENE II.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, ANDRÉE, CRIQUET, *at the far end of the stage.*

COUN. Ah! Good Heavens! Madam, are you all alone? What a pity that is! All alone! I fancied that my people had told me that the Viscount was here.

JUL. It is true that he came; but it was quite sufficient for him to know that you were not here, to make him leave again.

COUN. What! he has seen you?

JUL. Yes.

COUN. And has he said nothing to you?

JUL. No, Madam; and by this he wished to show that he is entirely devoted to your charms.

COUN. Really, I shall tax him with this behaviour. Whatever love one may have for me, I like those who love me to render what is due to the sex; and my disposition is not like that of those unjust women who plume themselves on the incivilities which their lovers show to other fair ones.

JUL. You should not be surprised at his behaviour, Madam. The love with which you inspire him shows itself in all his actions, and prevents his having eyes for any one except you.

COUN. I believe myself capable of causing a sufficiently strong passion, and I think myself sufficiently handsome, young, and well-born, thank Heaven; but that does not hinder that, though I inspire love, they should be civil and polite to others. (*Perceiving Criquet*). What are you doing here, fellow? Is there no ante-room in which to dawdle, to come when you are called? It is strange that in the provinces one cannot have a lacquey who knows his place! To whom am I speaking? Will you go outside, you little rogue?

SCENE III.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, ANDRÉE.

COUN. (*To Andrée*). Come here, girl.

AND. What may you please to want, Madam?

COUN. Take off my hood. Gently, then, you awkward girl: how you pull my head about with your heavy hands!

AND. I am doing it, Madam, as gently as I can.

COUN. Yes ; but as gently as you can is very rough to my head, and you have dislocated it for me. Hold this muff also ; do not let all this trail about, and take it to my wardrobe. Well ! where is she going to ? where is she going to ? What is she about, this goose ?⁴

AND. I wish to take this to your mistress of the robes,⁵ as you told me.

COUN. Good Heavens ! the ninny ! (*To Julia*). I beg your pardon, Madam. (*To Andrée*). I said to you my wardrobe, you big fool ; that means where my dresses are kept.

AND. Is a closet called a wardrobe at court, Madam ?

COUN. Yes, booby ; the place where the dresses are kept is so called.

AND. I shall bear this in mind, Madam, for your attic also, which ought to be called a ward-furniture.⁶

SCENE IV.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA.

COUN. What a trouble one has to teach these animals ?

JUL. I think them very happy, Madam to be under your discipline.

COUN. It is a daughter of my foster-mother whom I have taken to wait upon me ; and she is quite new to it yet.

JUL. You have acted nobly, Madam ; and it is glorious to train creatures like that.

COUN. Come, seats here. Hullo, fellows, fellows, fellows ! Upon my word, this is too bad, not to have a lacquey to hand chairs ! Girls, fellows ; fellows, girls ; some one ! I believe that all my people are dead, and that we shall be obliged to get chairs for ourselves.

SCENE V.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, ANDRÉE.

AND. What do you wish, Madam ?

COUN. One has to shout loud with you people.

⁴ The original has *oison bridé*, bridled goose. See page 388, note 23.

⁵ There is a joke in the original which cannot be rendered into English. *Une garde-robe* is a wardrobe, but *une garde-robe* is the Mistress of the Robes at Court.

⁶ The original has *garde-meuble*, furniture-warehouse, lumber-room.

AND. I was putting your muff and hood away in your press . . . I mean, in your wardrobe

COUN. Call me this little rogue of a lacquey.

AND. Hullo ! Criquet !

COUN. Leave your Criquet alone, you awkward wench, and call lacquey.

AND. Lacquey, then, and not Criquet, come and speak to Madam. I think he is deaf. Criq . . . lacquey, lacquey.

SCENE VI.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, ANDRÉE, CRIQUET.

CRI. Did you call ?

COUN. Where were you, you little rogue ?

CRI. In the street, Madam.

COUN. And why in the street ?

CRI. You told me to go outside.

COUN. You are a little jackanapes, my friend ; and you ought to know that outside, as these words are used by persons of quality, means the ante-room. Andrée, remember by-and-by to have this little rogue whipped by my equerry ; he is a little incorrigible fellow.

AND. Who is your equerry, Madam ? Is it Master Charles whom you call that ?

COUN. Hold your tongue stupid that you are : you cannot open your lips without uttering some impertinence. (*To Criquet*). Chairs. (*To Andrée*). And you, light two wax-candles in my silver candlesticks ; it is already getting late. What is the matter, that you look at me so wildly ?

AND. Madam . . .

COUN. Well, Madam ! What is it ?

AND. It is . . .

COUN. Well ?

AND. It is that I have no wax-candles.

COUN. How is this ! you have none ?

AND. No, Madam, unless it be tallow-candles.

COUN. The vulgar wench ! And where are the wax ones which I lately bought ?

AND. I have not seen any since I have been in the house.

COUN. Get out of my sight, insolent hussy. I shall

send you back to your parents. Bring me a glass of water.

SCENE VII.—THE COUNTESS and JULIA, *making mutual ceremonies to sit down.*

COUN. Madam!

JUL. Madam!

COUN. Ah! Madam!

JUL. Ah! Madam!

COUN. Pray, Madam!

JUL. Pray, Madam!

COUN. Oh! Madam!

JUL. Oh! Madam!

COUN. Eh! Madam!

JUL. Eh! Madam.

COUN. Eh, come! Madam.

JUL. Eh, come! Madam!

COUN. I am at home, Madam! We are agreed upon that. Do you take me for a provincial, Madam?

JUL. Heaven forfend, Madam.¹

SCENE VIII.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, ANDRÉE, *carrying a glass of water*; CRIQUET.

COUN. (*To Andrée*). Go away, you impertinent girl; I drink with a saucer. I tell you that you shall go and get me a saucer to drink with.

AND. Criquet, what is a saucer?

CRI. A saucer?

AND. Yes.

CRI. I know not.

COUN. (*To Andrée*). You do not move?

AND. We know neither of us what a saucer is.

COUN. Then learn that it is a plate whereon to place the glass.

SCENE IX.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA.

COUN.—There is but one Paris to be well waited upon! You are understood there with the slightest glance.

¹ Nearly a similar scene is found in *A Criticism on the School for Wives*, Act i., Scene 3 (see Vol. I.), between Climène and Eliza.

SCENE X.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, ANDRÉE, *bringing a glass of water with a plate on the top*, CRIQUET.

COUN. Well! did I tell you thus, ox-head? You should put the plate underneath.

AND. That is easy enough.

(Andrée breaks the glass in putting it on the plate.)

COUN. Well! did you ever see such a blunderer? You shall pay for my glass.

AND. Very well! yes, Madam, I shall pay for it.

COUN. But look at this awkward girl, this country lass, this blockhead, this . . .

AND. *(Making off)*. Really, Madam, if I have to pay for it, I do not want to be scolded.

COUN. Get out of my sight.

SCENE XI.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA.

COUN. In truth, Madam, it is a strange thing, these small towns! People do not know at all how to behave; and I have just paid two or three visits, where they nearly drove me desperate by the little respect they showed to my rank.

JUL. Where could they have learnt manners? They have made no journey to Paris.

COUN. They could nevertheless learn, if they would listen to people; but the worst is that they pretend to know as much about it as I, who have been two months in Paris, and have seen the whole court.

JUL. What stupid people these!

COUN. They are unbearable with the impertinent equality with which they treat people. For, after all, there must be some subordination in things; and what puts me beside myself, is that a town gentleman, of two days, or of two hundred years' standing, should have the effrontery to say that he is as good a gentleman as my late husband, who lived in the country, who had his pack of hounds, and who took the title of count in all the contracts which he made.

JUL. They live better in Paris, in these hotels, the recollection of which must be so dear. This hotel de Mouhy,

Madam, this hotel de Lyon, this hotel de Hollande, what pleasant places they are !⁸

COUN. No doubt that there is a great deal of difference between these places, and all these here. We meet there with good society which does not haggle to pay you every attention you could wish. Unless one likes, one needs not get off one's chair ; and, whether one wishes to see the review, or the great ballet of *Psyché*, you are served punctually.

JUL. I think, Madam, that, during your stay in Paris, you must have made many conquests of people of rank.

COUN. You may well believe, Madam, that every one who could be called a court gallant did not fail to come to my apartments, to say soft nothings ; and I keep in my desk their notes, which might show what proposals I have refused ; it is not necessary to tell you their names. You know what I mean by the court gallants.

JUL. I am surprised, Madam, that after all these great names at which I guess, you have been able to come down again to a Mr. Tibaudier, a counsellor at law, and to a Mr. Harpin, a receiver of taxes. The fall is great, I confess ; for, as for your Viscount, though but a country Viscount, he is at any rate a Viscount, and may make a journey to Paris, if he have not already done so : but a counsellor at law, and a receiver of taxes are somewhat inferior lovers for a grand Countess like you.

COUN. They are people whom we conciliate in the provinces for the need we may have of them ; they serve at least to fill up the vacancies of gallantry ; to increase the number of suitors ; and it is well, Madam, not to let one lover be sole master, for fear, that, failing rivals, his love may go to sleep through too much confidence.

JUL. I confess to you, Madam, that there is a marvellous deal to learn by what you say ; your conversation is a school, and every day I get hold of something in it.

⁸The name *hôtel* was given to a nobleman's or rich man's town-house as well as to an hotel. The places which Julia mentions are hotels in the English sense of the word.

SCENE XII.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, ANDRÉE, CRIQUET.

CRI. (*To the Countess*). Here is Jeannot from the counsellor's, who is asking for you, Madam.

COUN. Well! you little rogue, some more of your stupidities. A lacquey who knew his place, would have gone to speak quite low to the young lady attendant, who would have come quietly to whisper into the ear of her mistress: Madam, here is the servant of master so-and-so, who wishes to speak a word to you; to which the mistress would have answered: Let him come in.

SCENE XIII.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, ANDRÉE, CRIQUET, JEANNOT.

CRI. Come in, Jeannot.

COUN. Some more bungling. (*To Jeannot*). What is it, fellow? What have you there?

JEAN. It is the counsellor, Madam, who wishes you a very good day, and before coming here, sends you some pears from his garden, with this little note.

COUN. It is some *bon-chrétien*, which is very nice. Andrée, have them carried to the pantry.

SCENE XIV.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, CRIQUET, JEANNOT.

COUN. (*Giving some money to Jeannot*). Here, my child, here is something to drink my health with.

JEAN. Oh! no, Madam!

COUN. Take it, I tell you.

JEAN. My master has forbidden me Madam, to take anything from you.

COUN. That does not matter.

JEAN. Pardon me, Madam.

CRI. Eh! take it, Jeannot. If you do not want it, you can give it to me.

COUN. Tell your master that I am obliged to him.

CRI. (*To Jeannot, who is going*). Just give me this.

JEAN. Oh, yes! Do you think I am a fool!

CRI. It is I who made you take it.

JEAN. I should have taken it well enough without you.

COUN. What pleases me in this Mr. Tibaudier is, that he knows how to behave with persons of my rank, and that he is very respectful.

SCENE XV.—THE VISCOUNT, THE COUNTESS, JULIA, CRIQUET.

VIS. Madam, I have come to warn you that the comedy will soon be ready, and that, in a quarter of an hour, we can go into the large room.

COUN. I will have no crush at least. (*To Criquet*). Tell my porter to let no one enter.

VIS. In this case, Madam, I must inform you that I shall abandon the comedy; and I cannot take any pleasure in it, if the company be not numerous. Believe me, that if you wish to amuse yourself well, you should tell your people to let the whole town come in.

COUN. A chair, fellow. (*To the Viscount, after he is seated*). You are come just in time to receive a small sacrifice which I wish to make to you. Look here, it is a note of Mr. Tibaudier, who sends me some pears. I give you permission to read it aloud; I have not seen it yet.

VIS. (*After having read the note to himself*). This note is in capital style, and well merits being listened to. (*He reads*). "*Madam, I could not have made you the present which I send you, if, I gathered as little fruit from my garden as I gather from my love.*"

COUN. This shows you clearly that nothing passes between us.

VIS. "*The pears are not yet very ripe; but they will go all the better with the hardness of your heart, which, by its continuous disdain, does not promise me anything soft.*"⁹ Permit me, Madam, without entering upon an enumeration of your perfections and charms, which would betray me in a never-ending progress, to conclude this note by calling your attention to the fact that I am as good a Christian¹⁰ as the pears which I send you, since I return good for evil; which means, Madam, to express myself more intelligibly, that I

⁹ The original has *ne me promet pas poires molles*.

¹⁰ These pears were called *bon-chrétien*; the latter word means also Christian; hence the play on words.

offer you pears of bon-chrétien for choke-pears¹¹ which your cruelty makes me swallow every day.

"Tibaudier, your unworthy slave."

This, Madam, is a note to preserve.

COUN. There may, perhaps, be some words in it which does not belong to the Academy; but I can read a certain respect in it which pleases me much.

JUL. You are right, Madam; and, at the risk of offending the Viscount, I should love a man who wrote to me in that way.

SCENE XVI.—MR. TIBAUDIER, THE VISCOUNT, THE COUNTESS, JULIA.

COUN. Come here, Mr. Tibaudier; do not fear to come in. Your note has been well received, as well as your pears; and behold this lady pleading for you against your rival.

MR. TIB. I am obliged to her, Madam; and if ever she have a suit before our Court, she shall see that I am not forgetful of the honour she does me, in constituting herself the defender of my flame before your charms.

JUL. You have no need of a defender, Sir, and your cause is a just one.

MR. TIB. This notwithstanding, Madam, a good case has need of aid; and I have cause to fear that I shall see myself supplanted by such a rival, and that the Countess will be circumvented by the rank of the Viscount.

VIS. I had some hope before your note, Mr. Tibaudier; but it makes me fear for my love.

MR. TIB. Madam, these are also two little verselets or couplets which I have composed in your honour and glory.

VIS. Ah! I did not think that Mr. Tibaudier was a poet; and these two little verselets come to settle me!

COUN. He means two strophes. (*To Criquet*). Fellow, hand a chair to Mr. Tibaudier. (*Softly to Criquet, who brings him a chair*). A folding stool, you little animal.¹²

¹¹ The original has *poire d'angoisse*, an instrument of torture in the form of a pear, which was placed into the mouth of the victim. Upon turning a keg a number of springs thrust forth points of iron, so that it could only be taken out by means of the key.

¹² At Court, the difference of rank was known by the use of arm-chairs, chairs without arms, folding-stools, and foot-stools.

Mr. Tibaudier, place yourself there, and read us your strophes.

MR. TIB. A lady of quality
 Ravishes my soul:
 She has beauty,
 I have love;
 But I blame her
 For having pride.

VIS. I am lost after this.

COUN. The first verse is beautiful. A lady of quality.

JUL. I think it is a little too long; but one may take a certain license in uttering a fine thought.

COUN. Let us hear the other strophe.

MR. TIB. I do not know whether you doubt my perfect love:

 But this I know, that my heart, at each moment,

 Wishes to leave its melancholy abode,

 To go, out of respect, and pay its court to yours.

 After this, however, certain of my affection,

 And of my fidelity, unique of its kind,

 You ought in your turn,

 Contenting yourself by being a countess,

 To divest yourself in my favour of your tigress skin,

 Which hides your charms by night as well as by day.

VIS. Here I am supplanted by Mr. Tibaudier.

COUN. Do not try to sneer; for verses made in the provinces, these verses are very beautiful.

VIS. How, Madam, to sneer? Though his rival, I think these verses admirable, and not only call them two strophes, but two epigrams, as good as all those of Martial.

COUN. What! does Martial make verses? I thought he made nothing but gloves.¹³

¹³ Martial was a celebrated perfumer and glove-seller of the time, as well as valet to the brother of Louis XIV.

MR. TIB. It is not that Martial, Madam ; it is an author who lived about thirty or forty years ago.¹⁴

VIS. Mr. Tibaudier has read the authors, as you may hear. But let us go and see, Madam, whether my comedy and my music, with my entries of the ballet may combat in your mind the effect of these two strophes and of the note which we have just read.

COUN. My son the Count ought to be one of the party ; for he arrived this morning from my country-house with his tutor, whom I see inside.

SCENE XVII.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, THE VISCOUNT, MR. TIBAUDIER, MR. BOBINET, CRIQUET.

COUN. Hullo ! Mr. Bobinet, Mr. Bobinet, just come and show yourself.

MR. BOB. I wish the honourable company good evening.¹⁵ What desires the Countess of Escarbagnas from her very humble servant Bobinet ?

COUN. At what hour, Mr. Bobinet, did you start from Escarbagnas with my son the Count ?

MR. BOB. At a quarter to nine, Madam, as your orders had commanded it to me.

COUN. How fare my two other sons, the Marquis and the Commander ?

MR. BOB. They are, Heaven be praised, Madam, in perfect health.

COUN. Where is the Count ?

MR. BOB. In your beautiful apartment with the alcove, Madam.

COUN. What is he doing, Mr. Bobinet ?

MR. BOB. He is composing an exercise, Madam, which I have just dictated to him upon an epistle of Cicero.

COUN. Fetch him hither, Mr. Bobinet.

MR. BOB. It shall be done, Madam, according to your wishes.

¹⁴ The poet Martial lived from the year 43 to the year 104 ; hence Tibaudier, in correcting the Countess, commits, at least as great an error.

¹⁵ The original has *je donne le bon vèpres*, a very antiquated and pedantic expression, which at once depicts Mr. Bobinet.

SCENE XVIII.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, THE VISCOUNT, MR. TIBAUDIER.

VIS. (*To Countess*). This Mr. Bobinet, Madam, has a very learned look ; and I believe that he has some wit.

SCENE XIV.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, THE VISCOUNT, THE COUNT, MR. BOBINET, MR. TIBAUDIER.

MR. BOB. Come, come, show that you profit by the lessons that are given you. A bow to all the distinguished company.

COUN. (*Pointing to Julia*). Count, salute this lady ; bow low to the Viscount ; salute the Counsellor.

MR. TIB. I am enchanted, Madam, that you concede me the favour of embracing the Count, your son. One cannot love the trunk, without also loving the branches.

COUN. Good Heaven ! Mr. Tibaudier, what comparison are you employing there ?

JUL. Really, Madam, the Count is altogether charming.

VIS. This is a young gentleman who enters society well.

JUL. Who would have thought, Madame, that you had such a tall child.

COUN. Alas ! when he was born, I was so young that I was still playing with a doll.

JUL. It is your brother, not your son.

COUN. Have at least a care about his education, Mr. Bobinet.

MR. BOB. Madam, I shall overlook nothing to cultivate this young shoot, of which your goodness has done me the honour to confide the training ; and I shall inculcate in him the seeds of virtue.

COUN. Mr. Bobinet, just make him repeat some little gallantry of what you teach him.

MR. BOB. Come, Count, recite your lesson of yesterday morning.

COUNT. *Omne viro soli quod convenit esto verile, Omne viri . . .*

COUN. Fie ! Mr. Bobinet, what nonsense do you teach him there ?¹⁶

¹⁶ There is a play on words here which cannot be explained. The second line, which the Countess does not even allow her son to finish is

MR. BOB. It is Latin, Madam, and the first line of Jean Despautère.¹⁷

COUN. Good Heaven ! this Jean Despautère is an insolent fellow, and I beg you will teach him some more decent Latin than that.

MR. BOB. If you wish him to finish, Madam, the gloss will explain what it means.

COUN. No, no : it explains itself sufficiently.

SCENE XX.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, THE VISCOUNT, MR. TIBAUDIER, THE COUNT, MR. BOBINET, CRIQUET.

CRI. The actors send me to say that they are quite ready.

CRI. Let us take our seats. (*Pointing to Julia*). Mr. Tibaudier, take in this lady.

(*Criquet ranges the chairs on one side of the stage ; the Countess, Julia, and the Viscount sit down ; Mr. Tibaudier places himself at the feet of the Countess.*)

VIS. It is necessary to say that this comedy has been written only to connect together the different pieces of music and dancing of which they wished to compose this entertainment, and that . . .

COUN. Good Heavens ! let us see the affair. We have sufficient sense to understand things.

VIS. Let them begin as quickly as they can, and let them prevent, if possible, any intruder from troubling our entertainment. (*The violins commence an overture*).

SCENE XXI.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, THE VISCOUNT, THE COUNT, MR. HARPIN, MR. TIBAUDIER, MR. BOBINET, CRIQUET.

MR. HAR. Zounds ! that is a pretty set out, and I rejoice to see what I do see.

COUN. Hullo ! Mr. Receiver, what do you mean by this

Omne viri specie pictum vir dicitur esse, and both lines mean : "All that suits man alone is of the masculine gender, and so is all that is represented under the figure of a man."

¹⁷ For the grammar of Despautère, see *The Physician in Spite of Himself*, Vol. II., note 25.

behaviour? Do people come to interrupt a comedy in this way?

MR. HAR. Zounds! Madam, I am enchanted with this adventure; and this shows me what I am to believe of you, and the certainty which there is in the grief of your heart, and in the oaths which you have sworn to me of its fidelity.

COUN. But really one does not come to throw oneself in the midst of a comedy, and to trouble an actor who is speaking.¹⁸

MR. HAR. Eh! the deuce! The real comedy which is performed here, is played by you; and if I do trouble you, I care very little about it.

COUN. Really, you do not know what you are saying.

MR. HAR. Indeed, zounds! Indeed, I know it well enough, zounds! and . . . (*Mr. Bobinet, frightened, runs off, taking the Count with him, followed by Criquet.*)

COUN. Fie, Sir, how nasty it is to swear in that way.

MR. HAR. Eh! Odds bobs! if there be anything nasty, it is not my swearing, but your goings on; and it would be better for you to swear, heads, 'sdeaths, and blood, than to do what you are doing with the Viscount.

VIS. I do not know, Mr. Receiver, of what you have to complain; and if . . .

MR. HAR. (*To the Viscount*). As for you, Sir, I have nothing to say to you. You do well to press your suit, it is natural; I find nothing strange in it, and I ask your pardon if I have interrupted your comedy; but you cannot think it strange that I complain of her behaviour; and we have both reason to act as we are acting.

VIS. I have nothing to say against this, and do not know the causes of complaint which you may have against the Countess of Escarbagnas.

COUN. When one has jealous cares, one ought not to behave in this manner; but to come and complain gently to the person one loves.

¹⁸ It is probable that when this play was represented at Saint-Germain, Mr. Harpin interrupted some part of the *Ballet des ballets*; and even at the Palais Royal, some dialogue was probably spoken. When the *Countess of Escarbagnas* is performed now at the *Comédie-Française* a part of one of Molière's plays is always acted.

MR. HAR. I, complain gently !

COUN. Yes. One does not come to bawl out in a theatre what should be said in private.

MR. HAR. I came, zounds ! expressly ; it is just the place I want ; and I could wish that it were a public stage, to tell with more effect all the truths about you.

COUN. Is there need of making so great a noise about a comedy with which the Viscount entertains me ? You see that Mr. Tibaudier, who loves me, behaves more respectfully than you.

MR. HAR. Mr. Tibaudier behaves as it pleases him : I do not know on what footing Mr. Tibaudier is with you ; but Mr. Tibaudier is not an example for me, and I am not disposed to pay the violins to let others dance.

COUN. But really, Mr. Receiver, you know not what you are saying. One does not act in this manner with ladies of quality ; and they who hear you would think that there was something strange between you and me.

MR. HAR. Eh ! Odds bobs ! Madam, let us drop this nonsense.

COUN. But what then do you mean with your : Let us drop this nonsense ?

MR. HAR. I mean that I find nothing strange in it that you should give way to the merits of the Viscount ; you are not the first woman who plays that sort of character in society, and who has a Receiver after her, whose affection and purse one finds her betray for the first comer who suits her views. But do not think it strange that I am not the dupe of an infidelity so common to the coquettes of the present day, and that I come to assure you before company, that I break off all connection with you, and that Mr. Receiver shall no longer be Mr. Giver to you.

COUN. It is marvellous how hot-headed lovers are becoming the fashion ! One sees nothing else on all sides. There, there, Mr. Receiver, drop your anger, and come and take a seat to see the comedy.

MR. HAR. I, zounds ! take a seat ! (*Pointing to Mr. Tibaudier*). Seek your simpletons at your own feet. I leave you, Countess, to the Viscount ; and it is to him that I shall send your letters by-and-by. Now my scene is finished, my part performed. I am the company's servant.

MR. TIB. Mr. Receiver we shall meet each other elsewhere than here; and I shall show you that I can use the sword as well as the pen.¹⁹

MR. HAR. (*Going*). You are right, Mr. Tibaudier.

COUN. As for me, I am taken aback by this insolence.

VIS. Jealous people, Madam, are like those who lose lawsuits; they have the privilege of saying anything. Let us be silent for the comedy.

SCENE XXII.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, THE VISCOUNT, MR. TIBAUDIER, JEANNOT.

JEAN. (*To Viscount*.) This is a note, which I have been told to give you.

VIS. (*Reading*). "*In case you have any measures to take, I promptly send you some news. The quarrel between your parents and those of Julia has just been made up: and the condition of this reconciliation, is the marriage of you and her. Good night.*" (*To Julia*). Upon my word, Madam, behold our comedy also finished.

(*The Viscount, the Countess, Julia, and Mr. Tibaudier rise.*)

JUL. Ah! Cléante, what happiness! Could our affection have dared to hope for so happy an issue?

COUN. How now? What does this mean?

VIS. This means, Madam, that I marry Julia; and if you believe me, to render the comedy more complete in all points, you will marry Mr. Tibaudier, and give Miss Andrée to his lacquey, of whom he shall make his valet.

COUN. What! to hoodwink a person of my rank thus?

VIS. It was meant without offence, Madam; comedies require these sorts of things.

COUN. Yes, Mr. Tibaudier, I marry you in order to put the whole world in a rage.

MR. TIB. It is a great honour to me, Madam.

VIS. (*To the Countess*). Permit us, Madam, that while we are getting into a rage we may witness the end of the performance.²⁰

¹⁹ The original has *que je suis au poil et à la plume*, a term of the chase applied to dogs which could follow all kinds of game.

²⁰ These last words prove that there was some part of a play or ballet coming at the end of the *Countess of Escarbagnas*; this was probably the last *intermède* of *Psyché*, so that the spectators might not have become too cloyed with operatic splendours, or with the coarseness of Mr. Harpin.

LES FEMMES SAVANTES.
COMÉDIE.

THE LEARNED LADIES.
A COMEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

(*THE ORIGINAL IN VERSE.*)

MARCH 11TH, 1672.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

THE comedy, *The Learned Ladies*, was represented on the 11th of March 1672, and performed nineteen times, partly before, and partly after Easter. In this play, Molière aimed not, as in *The Pretentious Young Ladies*, at sketching a temporary folly, and affectation of language and manners, but in giving us characters which exist, with certain modifications, in all ages. Philaminte is the woman who rules her home despotically, wishes to be the queen of a literary meeting to be held at her house, and treats her husband and children as inferior beings. But she is strong-minded, and remains unmoved when she thinks that misfortunes overwhelm her. Bélise, the sister of Chrysale, is of weak intellect, with a very limited amount of brains, and fancies that everybody is in love with her. She is based chiefly upon Hespérie,—a character taken from a comedy by Desmarets, called *The Visionaries*. Armande, the elder daughter of Philaminte, is jealous, vindictive, and hides her evil thoughts under a pretended Platonism. These three ladies are regular “blue stockings,” whilst Henriette, the younger daughter, is the model of an honest, sensible, and well-brought-up young lady. Chrysale represents the weak-minded man who thinks he is always leading when, in reality, he is only led, afraid of his wife and of quarrels, and giving way to her, whenever she insists. He thinks he is the master because he talks in a loud voice. Ariste, Martine, and the young lover Clitandre, are also very natural. But the two heroes of the play are Trissotin and Vadius, the first a pedant and a wit, the second a pedant and a scholar; the first full of vanity and jealousy, the second full of pride and *odium scholasticum*; finally, the first anxious for the dowry, and not for the heart, of Henriette, and showing openly his cupidity when he imagines that her parents are ruined.

It is said that Molière wished to put upon the stage the Abbé Cotin and Ménage, in drawing the characters of Trissotin and Vadius. Molière denied the latter delineation, and Ménage himself pretended not to recognize the portrait of Vadius. But as to the Abbé Cotin, no doubt is possible; for the sonnet “On the Ague of the Princess Uranie,” and the madrigal “On the Amarant Coach,” are taken literally from the works of the Abbé, published in 1663. The Abbé was a fertile rhymester of *rondeaux*, madrigals, riddles, and moreover a fashionable preacher in Paris. Born in 1604, he became chaplain to the king about 1635, and member of the Academy in 1655. He was the intimate friend of Mademoiselle de

Montpensier, who read his riddles to the king and queen, and gravely called himself "The Father of the French riddle." He attacked the *Précieuses*, Ménage and Mademoiselle de Scudéry, and thought he had found an ally in Molière. He quarrelled also with Boileau, against whom he wrote a Satire, and who replied by saying that "He who despises Cotin, does not esteem his king, and has according to Cotin, no belief in God, faith, or law." It is also stated that he had written against Molière; and hence the latter's attack upon him. Cotin died, totally forgotten, in 1681.

I have already given my opinion about the bringing upon the stage of living personages.¹ Let me, however, state that only the ridiculous side of Cotin's character appears to have been portrayed by Molière, but that no one ever applied to the Abbé, the villanous traits of Taris-sotin.

Several English Dramatists appear to have borrowed from this play of Molière.

Thomas Wright, in *The Female Virtuoso*, performed at the Theatre Royal in 1693, has imitated partly Molière's *Learned Ladies*. In the English comedy, the characters of Sir Maurice Meanwell, Mr. Meanwell, Clerimont, Lady Meanwell, Mrs. Lovewitt, and Catchat, correspond to those of Chrysale, Ariste, Clitandre, Philaminte, Armande, Henriette, and Bélise in the French comedy, whilst Sir Maggot Jingle is Trissotin. Lady Meanwell designs however Marianna to marry Witless, an entirely new character, not to be found in the original play. *The Female Virtuoso* was revived at the theatre, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, January 10, 1721, as *No Fools like Wits*, in order to anticipate Cibber's *Refusal*. On the 14th of February 1721, was performed at the theatre Drury Lane, Cibber's *Refusal, or The Ladies' Philosophy*, which is chiefly taken from Molière's *Learned Ladies*. Sir Gilbert Wrangle (Chrysale), becomes a South Sea director, and part of the plot depends on the infatuation of the South Sea scheme. The other characters are like Molière's. This piece ran for no more than six nights.

John Miller, in the *Man of Taste* (see Introductory Notice to *The Pretentious Young Ladies*, Vol. I.,) which was acted at Drury Lane, March 6th, 1735, has borrowed from Molière's *Learned Ladies* the characters of Sir Humphrey and Lady Henpeck; Ariste becomes Freeloove, and Clitandre is changed into Harcourt. At the end of Act IV., Miller has somewhat freely imitated the second and third scenes of the act of Molière's play; and then Freeloove takes the part of Martin, the servant. The ending is also different in the English and French Comedies.

¹ See Introductory Notice to the *Impromptu of Versailles*, Vol. I.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CHRYSALE, *a citizen*.²

ARISTE, *his brother*.

CLITANDRE, *Henriette's lover*.

TRISSOTIN, *a wit*.

VADIUS, *a savant*.

LÉPINE, *a lacquey*.

JULIEN, *Vadius' servant*.

A NOTARY.

PHILAMINTE, *Chrysale's wife*.

ARMANDE, } *daughters of Chrysale and of Philaminte.*
HENRIETTE, }

BÉLISE, *Chrysale's sister*.

MARTINE, *a kitchen maid*.³

Scene.—PARIS, IN CHRYSALE'S HOUSE.

² Molière played this part. According to the inventory taken after his death, and given by the late M. E. Soulié, his dress consisted of "a jerkin and breeches of black velvet, with flowers, on a dark yellow ground, a waistcoat of violet and gold gauze, adorned with buttons, a gold band, tags, and gloves."

³ It is said that this small part was played by a servant of Molière, whose name was really Martine.

THE LEARNED LADIES.

(*LES FEMMES SAVANTES.*)

ACT I.

SCENE I.—ARMANDE, HENRIETTE.

AR. What! the lovely name of maid is a title, sister, of which you wish to abandon the sweet charm? And you dare enjoy the thought of getting married? Can such a vulgar design have entered your head?

HEN. Yes, sister.

AR. Ah! is that yes to be borne? And can it be heard without a heart-ache?

HEN. What can there be in marriage to constrain you, sister . . . ?

AR. Ah! good Heavens! fie!

HEN. How?

AR. Fie! I tell you. Can you not conceive the disgust that such a word inspires, the moment it is heard; with what a strange image one is shocked, on what filthy prospects it leads the thought? Do not you shudder at it, and can you, sister, bring your heart to contemplate the consequences of this word?

HEN. The consequences of this word, when I contemplate them, show me a husband, children, a household; and I see nothing there, to talk rationally, which shocks my imagination and makes me shudder.

AR. Oh Heavens! have such ties aught in them to please you?

HEN. And can one do aught better, at my age, than to attach to one's self, by the title of husband, a man who loves you, and is by you beloved; and procure from a union, dictated by tenderness, the sweet of an innocent life? Has such a well-suited tie no charms?

AR. Good Heavens! what a grovelling mind is yours! What a mean part to play in the world, to imprison yourself within a household, and to get no glimpse of more exciting pleasures than an idolized husband and brats of children! Leave the low pleasures of such things to coarse people, and vulgar persons. To higher objects raise your desires, endeavour to have a taste for more noble pleasures, and treating with contempt the senses and matter, abandon yourself entirely to the mind, as we do. You have our mother as an example before you, who is honoured and called everywhere a learned woman; try, as I do, to prove yourself her daughter. Aspire to the knowledge which is in the family, and feel the sweet charms which the love of study instils into people's hearts. Far from being a submissive slave to the laws of men, wed yourself to Philosophy, sister, which elevates us above the whole human race, and invests reason with sovereign sway, subjecting to her laws the animal part, of which the gross appetite places us on a level with brutes. These are the beautiful desires, the sweet ties, which ought to fill up the moments of our lives; and the anxieties in which I see so many women delight, appear to my eyes the most horrible meanness.⁴

HEN. Heaven, whose commands we see to be all-powerful, fits us at our birth for different functions; and every mind is not composed of the stuff cut out to make a philosopher. If yours is apt to soar to the heights of learned speculations, mine, sister, is formed to creep, and to small concerns its weakness confines itself. Let us not disturb the righteous arrangements of Heaven; and let us each follow the promptings of our instincts. Dwell, through the flight of a grand and beautiful genius, in the

⁴ Such arguments were really employed by the *Précieuses*.

lofty regions of philosophy, while my mind, remaining here below, shall taste the earthly bliss of wedlock. Thus, differing in our manner of living, we shall both imitate our mother: you, as regards the soul and noble aspirations; I, as regards the senses and the grosser pleasures; you, in the productions of mind and knowledge; I, sister, in those which are material.

AR. If we pretend to model ourselves upon another person, we should resemble her in her finest parts, and only to cough and spit like her is not at all taking her, sister, for a model.⁵

HEN. But you would not be what you boast yourself to be, if my mother had possessed only those finer parts; and it is well for you, sister, that her noble genius has not always dwelt upon philosophy. Pray, grant me, with some kindness, the meanness to which you owe your being; and, by wishing that I should imitate you, do not suppress some little *savant* who may wish to come into the world.

AR. I perceive that your mind cannot be cured of the foolish infatuation of getting a husband: but let us know, if it pleases you, whom you mean to take: you surely do not intend to take Clitandre?

HEN. And why should it not be so? Is he devoid of merit? Is the choice mean?

AR. No; but it is a dishonest design to endeavour to take away another's conquest; and it is not a fact unknown to the world, that Clitandre has openly sighed after me.

HEN. Yes; but all these sighs are in vain with you, and you do not descend to human weakness; your mind has for ever renounced marriage, and philosophy has all your affection. Therefore, not having any design upon Clitandre, what matters it to you if some one else pretend to him?

AR. This empire which reason holds over the senses does not make us renounce the charms of homage; and we may refuse as a husband a deserving man whom we like to see as an adorer in our train.

⁵ The original has "*Et ce n'est point du tout la prendre pour modèle, ma soeur, que de tousser et de cracher comme elle.*" This was a proverbial expression in Molière's time.

HEN. I have not prevented him from continuing to worship your perfections; and I have but accepted, after your refusal, the offer of the homage of his flame.

AR. But, pray, do you think there is perfect security in the offers of affection from a spited lover? Do you believe that his passion for you is very strong, and that all his affection for me is quite dead in his heart?

HEN. So he tells me, sister; and, for my part, I believe him.

AR. Do not be so credulous, sister; and rather believe, when he says he has left me and loves you, that he does not reflect seriously upon it, and deceives himself.

HEN. I cannot tell; but to cut the matter short, if such be your pleasure, it is very easy to find out the truth: I perceive him coming; and he can give us a full explanation upon the subject.

SCENE II.—CLITANDRE, ARMANDE, HENRIETTE.

HEN. To dispel the doubt in which my sister plunges me, please to explain your feelings, Clitandre, as regards myself and her; bare your heart, and vouchsafe to inform us which of us has the right to pretend to your love.

AR. No, no, I will not impose the rigour of an explanation on your passion; I have a consideration for people, and know how embarrassing must be the constraining effort of these open avowals.

CLI. No, Madam; my heart, which dissimulates little, feels no constraint to make a frank avowal. Such a step throws me into no confusion; and I will confess openly, frankly, and fearlessly, that the bonds which hold me captive, my love and my affection, are all on this side (*Pointing to Henriette*). Let not this avowal disturb you; you yourself would have it so. Your attractions had caught me, and my tender sighs sufficiently proved to you the ardour of my desires, my heart burned for you with a steadfast flame: but your eyes did not think their conquest sufficiently beautiful. I have borne a hundred various insults under their yoke; they swayed my heart like proud tyrants; and I sought for myself, wearied with so much trouble, conquerors more humane, and chains less galling. (*Pointing to Henriette*). I have met them, Madam, in those

eyes, and their glances are forever precious to me; by one pitying look they have dried my tears, and did not disdain what your charms rejected. Such rare kindness has had the effect of so moving me, that there is nought that could make me throw off my fetters; and I dare now beseech you, Madam, to make no attempt to regain my love, nor to try to call back a heart resolved to die in this sweet transport.

AR. Pray, Sir, who tells you that I have such a wish, and that I am so strongly concerned about you? I think it amusing of you to imagine such a thing, and very impertinent to declare it to me.⁶

HEN. Eh! gently, sister. Where then is that morality, which knows so well to control the animal parts, and to keep the reins tight on anger's promptings?

AR. But you who speak of morality, where do you practise it, when you respond to the passion which is shown to you without the leave of those who have given you birth? Know that duty subjects you to their laws; that you are not allowed to love except through their choice; that they possess supreme authority over your heart, and that it is criminal to dispose of it yourself.

HEN. I acknowledge the kindness you show me in teaching me so well matters connected with duty. My heart shall regulate its conduct according to your lessons; and to show you, sister, that I profit by them, Clitandre, have a care to support your love by the consent of those who gave me birth. Obtain a legitimate power over my affection, so that I may love you without crime.

CLI. I am going to do so openly, and with all my might; and I was only waiting for this sweet consent.

AR. You triumph, sister, and look as if you imagined that this vexes me.

HEN. I, sister! not at all. I know that the dictates of reason are always all-powerful over your senses, and that through the teachings drawn from wisdom's source you are above such weaknesses. Far from suspecting you of such vexation, I think that in this case you will bestir yourself

⁶ The same declaration takes place in *The Misanthrope*, Act v., Scene 6 (see Vol. II.); and in *Psyche*, Act i., Scene 3.

for me, second his demand, and, by your suffrage, accelerate the happy moment of our marriage. I entreat you to do so and to work at it . . .

AR. Your small wit pretends to jest; and we behold you quite proud of a heart that is thrown at you.

HEN. Much as this heart may be thrown, it would not at all displease you; and if your eyes could pick it up from before me, they would easily take the trouble to stoop.

AR. I do not deign to condescend to answer this; and it is silly prattle which ought not to be listened to.

HEN. That is very well on your part, and you show us a moderation which can hardly be conceived.

SCENE III.—CLITANDRE, HENRIETTE.

HEN. Your sincere avowal has surprised her not a little.

CLI. She sufficiently merits such frankness, and all the haughtiness of her foolish pride is, at least, worthy of my sincerity. But since you have allowed me, I am going to your father, Madam . . .

HEN. The surest way is to gain over my mother. My father is of a disposition to consent to everything; but he attaches little weight to his resolutions; he has received from Heaven a certain kindness of heart which instantly subjects him to the will of his wife. It is she who governs and absolutely makes her pleasure law. I should wish much to see you a little more complaisant, I confess it, to her and to my aunt, of a disposition which, while flattering their ideas, might attract the warmth of their esteem.

CLI. My heart, with its innate sincerity, never could flatter their character even in your sister; and learned women are not at all to my taste. I admit that a woman may be enlightened upon everything: but I do not wish to behold the unseemly passion of making her learned in order to become learned; and I like that she should, when questioned, often pretend to be ignorant of the things which she knows; in short, I wish her to hide her studying; to have knowledge without wishing it to be known, without quoting authors, without using grand words, and being witty on the least opportunity. I much respect your mother; but I cannot at all approve of her whims,

and constitute myself the echo of all the incense which she wafts to her hero for wit. Her Mr. Trissotin annoys and wearies me; and it makes me angry to find her esteem such a man; that she should rank among men of great and fine mind, a booby whose writings are everywhere damned; a pedant whose copious pen furnishes the whole market with waste paper.

HEN. His writings, his speeches, everything from him seems tiresome; and I agree in a great measure with your taste and views; but, as he has much influence with my mother, you must constrain yourself to be somewhat complaisant to him. A lover pays his court where his heart has taken root; he aims at gaining every one's favour in that spot; and so as to have no one opposed to his flame, he endeavours to please the very house-dog.⁷

CLI. Yes, you are right; but Mr. Trissotin inspires me from the bottom of my soul with a dislike which prevails over everything. I cannot consent, to gain his suffrages, to dishonour myself by praising his works. It is through them that he first appeared to my sight, and I knew him before I had seen him. I perceived in the trashy writings which he gives us what his pedantic person displays in every spot, the constant height of his presumption, his intrepid good opinion of himself, the indolent state of extreme confidence which renders him at all times so satisfied with himself, which makes him smile incessantly at his own merit, which makes him congratulate himself upon everything that he writes, and which renders him unwilling to exchange his reputation for all the honours of the general of an army.

HEN. One must be sharp-sighted to perceive all this.

CLI. It went even so far as his figure; and I saw by the verses which he throws at our heads how the poet was shaped: and so well had I guessed every trait of him, that, meeting in the Palais⁸ one day a man, I laid a wager that it was Trissotin in person, as indeed it was.

HEN. What a story!

⁷ This is partly taken from Plautus' *Asinaria*.

⁸ The *Palais* stands for the *Palais de Justice*, of which the galleries were crowded with shops, much frequented in Molière's time. A comedy of Corneille, called *The Gallery of the Palace*, was represented in 1634.

CLI. No; I tell the thing as it happened. But I perceive your aunt. Permit me, pray, in this spot to reveal our secret to her, and endeavour to gain her over to intercede with your mother.

SCENE IV.—BÉLISE, CLITANDRE.

CLI. Allow a lover, Madam, to take advantage of this happy moment, to speak to you, and to reveal to you the sincere flame . . .

BEL. Ah! gently; be careful not to bare your soul too much. If I have enrolled you in the ranks of my lovers, content yourself with letting your eyes be the sole interpreters, and do not explain to me, in another language, those desires which with me pass for an outrage. Love me, sigh, burn for my charms; but allow me not to know it. I may shut my eyes to your secret flame as long as you confine yourself to dumb interpreters; but if the mouth presume to meddle with it, I must banish you for ever from my sight.⁹

CLI. Do not take alarm at the projects of my heart. Henriette, Madam, is the object which charms me; and I ardently beseech your kindness to second the love inspired by her beauty.

BEL. Ah! certainly, the turn is witty, I must confess. This subtle subterfuge deserves to be praised; and in all the novels which I have read I have met with nothing more ingenious.

CLI. It is not at all a stroke of wit, Madam; but it is a frank avowal of the feelings of my heart. Heaven, by the bonds of immutable ardour, has fettered me to the beauties of Henriette; Henriette holds me 'neath her gentle empire, and a marriage with Henriette is the bliss to which I aspire. You have much influence; and all I wish is that you would deign to favour my affection.

BEL. I perceive what this demand is gently aiming at, and I know what I am to understand under that name. The figure of speech is clever; and, not to change it, instead of the things which my heart prompts me to answer

⁹ Bélise speaks like a regular *Précieuse*.

you, I shall say that Henriette is opposed to wedlock, and that without claiming aught you must burn for her.

CLI. Ah! Madam, why such confusion? and why will you imagine what has no existence?

BEL. Good Heavens! no compliments. Cease to gain-say what your looks have often given me to understand. It suffices that we are satisfied with the subterfuge of which your love adroitly bethought itself, and that underneath the figure which respect obliges you to use, we are good enough to suffer your homage, provided its transports, enlightened by honour, offer naught but refined vows on my altar.

CLI. But . . .

BEL. Farewell. This ought to suffice you for once, and I have said more to you than I wished to say.

CLI. But your mistake . . .

BEL. Enough; I now blush, and my modesty has made a surprising effort.

CLI. I will be hanged if I love you; and prudent . . .

BEL. No, no, I shall hear no more.¹⁰

SCENE V.—CLITANDRE, *alone*.

The deuce take the foolish woman with her fancies! Has the like madness ever been seen? Let us go and entrust some one else with this affair, and take the advice of some clever person.¹¹

ACT II.

SCENE I.—ARISTE, *leaving Clitandre, but still speaking to him*.

Yes, I shall take you the answer as soon as possible; I shall insist, and press, and do all that is necessary. What a deal a lover has to say that could be said in one word! And how impatiently he wishes what he desires! Never . . .

¹⁰ The character of Bélise is partly taken from that of Hespérie in the comedy, *The Visionaries* of Desmarets, which greatly amused Louis XIV. Thomas Corneille had already imitated the character of Hespérie, in *The Baron of Albikrac*, performed four years before *The Learned Ladies*.

¹¹ This is the only monologue in *The Learned Ladies*.

SCENE II.—CHRYSALE, ARISTE.

AR. Ah ! Heaven guard you, brother !

CH. And you also, brother !

AR. Do you know what brings me here ?

CH. No ; but if you wish, I am ready to hear it.

AR. You know Clitandre sufficiently long ?

CH. No doubt, and I see him at our house.

AR. In what esteem do you hold him, brother ?

CH. As a man of honour, of wit, of courage, and well-behaved : I see few people who are so deserving.

AR. A certain wish of his brings me hither, and I am glad that you set store by him.

CH. I knew his late father in my journey to Rome.

AR. Very well.

CH. He was a sterling gentleman, brother.

AR. So they say.

CH. We were but eight-and-twenty at that time, and, on my word, we were a couple of brisk young fellows.

AR. I can well believe it.

CH. We were very well with the Roman ladies, and every one there spoke of our pranks : we caused some jealousies.

AR. Nothing could be better. But let us come to the subject which brings me hither.

SCENE III.—BÉLISE, *entering softly and listening* ;
CHRYSALE, ARISTE.

AR. Clitandre makes me his spokesman with you, and his heart is smitten with the charms of Henriette.

CH. What ! of my daughter ?

AR. Yes ; he is bewitched by her, and I never saw a more fervid lover.

BEL. (*To Ariste*). No, no ; I hear you. You are ignorant of the story ; and the matter is not as you believe it to be.

AR. How, sister ?

BEL. Clitandre abuses your minds ; and it is of another object that his heart is enamoured.

AR. You are jesting. It is not Henriette whom he loves ?

BEL. No ; I am certain of it.

AR. He has told me so himself.

BEL. Eh ! yes.

AR. You behold me, sister, commissioned by him to ask her from her father this day.

BEL. Very good.

AR. And his very love has urged me to hasten the moment of such an alliance.

BEL. Better still. One cannot deceive more gallantly. Henriette, among ourselves, is an amusement, an ingenious screen, a pretext, brother, to hide another flame, the mystery of which I know ; and I wish to disabuse you both of your error.

AR. But since you know so many things, sister, tell us, pray, who is this other object whom he loves.

BEL. You wish to know it ?

AR. Yes, what of it ?

BEL. Me !

AR. You ?

BEL. Myself.

AR. Eh, sister !

BEL. What is the meaning of this Eh ? and what is there surprising in what I say ? One is handsome enough, I imagine, to be able to say that it is not one heart only which is subject to our empire ; and Dorante, Damis, Cléonte, and Lycidas may show that we have some charms.

AR. These gentlemen love you ?

BEL. Yes, with all their might.

AR. They have told you so ?

BEL. No one has taken that liberty ; they have so well known to reverence me up to this day, that they never breathed a word of their love. But to offer me their hearts and to devote themselves to my services, dumb interpreters have sufficiently done their office.

AR. We hardly ever see Damis come into the house.

BEL. It is to show me a more submissive respect.

AR. With stinging words, Dorante insults you everywhere.

BEL. They are the transports of a jealous rage.

AR. Cléonte and Lycidas have both taken wives to themselves.

BEL. It is through the despair to which I have reduced their flames.

AR. Upon my word, dear sister, pure fancies.

CH. (*To Bélise*). You ought to divest yourself of those fancies.

BEL. Ah! Fancies! they are fancies, you say. Fancies, I! Really, fancies is very good; I am very happy in having fancies, brothers, and I did not know that I had any fancies.

SCENE IV.—CHRYSALE, ARISTE.

CH. Yes, our sister is mad.

AR. It is growing day by day. But let us resume our conversation once more. Clitandre asks you to give him Henriette as a wife. See what answer is to be made to his flame.

CH. Is there need to ask? I consent with all my heart, and consider it a great honour to be allied to him.

AR. You know that he has no great abundance of worldly goods . . .

CH. That is a consideration of but small importance; he is rich in virtues; that is worth treasures; and besides his father and I were but one soul in two bodies.

AR. Let us speak to your wife, and endeavour to render her favourable . . .

CH. It suffices; I accept him for a son-in-law.

AR. Yes; but to strengthen your consent, brother, it would do no harm to have her permission. Let us go. . . .

CH. Are you jesting? There is no need. I answer for my wife, and take the matter upon myself.

AR. But . . .

CH. Leave it to me, I tell you, and be under no apprehension. I am going to prepare her immediately.

AR. Be it so. I am going to sound your Henriette upon this, and shall come back to know. . . .

CH. The business is concluded; and I am going to speak to my wife without delay.

SCENE V.—CHRYSALE, MARTINE.

MAR. Just like my luck! Alas! it is a true saying;

give a dog a bad name, and hang him;¹² and service to another is no inheritance.

CH. What is the matter? What ails you, Martine?

MAR. What ails me?

CH. Yes.

MAR. What ails me is that they have discharged me to-day, Sir.

CH. Discharged!

MAR. Yes. Madam sends me away.

CH. I do not understand this. How?

MAR. I am threatened with a hundred blows, if I do not leave this.

CH. No, you shall stay; I am satisfied with you. My wife is at times somewhat hot-headed; and I will not, I . . .

SCENE VI.—PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE, CHRYSALE, MARTINE.

PHIL. (*Perceiving Martine*). What! I still find you, you booby. Quick, out with you, jade; come, leave the place, and never show yourself in my sight.

CH. Gently.

PHIL. No, there is an end of it.

CH. Eh!

PHIL. I wish her to go.

CH. But what has she done, to insist in this manner. . .

PHIL. What! you back her up?

CH. In no way.

PHIL. Do you take her part against me?

CH. Good Heavens! no; I am simply asking her crime.

PHIL. Am I likely to send her away without a legitimate cause?

CH. I do not say that; but it is right that our people should . . .

PHIL. No; she shall leave this, I tell you.

CH. Well! yes. Does any one say aught against it?

PHIL. I will have no opposition to my wishes.

CH. Agreed.

¹² The original has *qui veut noyer son chien l'accuse de la rage*, he who wants to drown his dog accuses him of being mad.

PHIL. And you ought, as a sensible husband, to be with me against her, and share my anger.

CH. (*Turning to Martine*). So I do. Yes, my wife is right in sending you away, you jade, and your crime deserves no mercy.

MAR. But what have I done then?

CH. (*Softly*). Upon my word, I do not know.

PHIL. What is more, she is disposed to make very light of it.

CH. Has she broken some mirror or piece of porcelain, that you are so incensed against her?

PHIL. Should I send her away? and do you imagine that I should put myself in a temper for such a trifle?

CH. (*To Martine*). What does it mean? (*To Philaminte*). The matter is of importance, then?

PHIL. Undoubtedly. Have I ever been found an unreasonable woman!

CH. Has she, through a spirit of negligence, allowed some ewer or silver platter to be stolen?

PHIL. That would be nothing.

CH. (*To Martine*). Oh! oh! the deuce, good woman. (*To Philaminte*). What! Have you surprised her in being dishonest?

PHIL. It is worse than all that.

CH. Worse than all that.

PHIL. Worse.

CH. (*To Martine*) How! the deuce, you jade! (*To Philaminte*). Eh! Has she committed . . .

PHIL. She has, with all the matchless insolence, after thirty lessons, shocked my ear by the impropriety of a low and vulgar word, which Vaugelas¹³ condemns in decisive terms.

CH. Is that the . . .

PHIL. What! always, notwithstanding our remonstrances, to be upsetting the foundation of all sciences, grammar, which knows how to control even kings, and makes them, with a high hand obey its laws!

¹³ Vaugelas, who died in 1650, that is twenty-two years before *The Learned Ladies* was performed, was a celebrated grammarian, who wrote *Remarks on the French Language*. He is mentioned five times in Molière's comedy.

CH. I thought her guilty of the most serious misbehaviour.

PHIL. What ! you do not think this crime unpardonable ?

CH. Indeed.

PHIL. I should like to see you condone her !

CH. I do not think of it.

BEL. It is true that these are pitiful things. All construing is destroyed by her, and in the laws of language she has been instructed a hundred times.

MAR. All that you preach is, I believe, well and good ; but as for me I shall never know how to speak your gibberish.

PHIL. The impudent girl ! to call gibberish a language founded on reason and on elegant custom.

MAR. We always speak well when we make ourselves understood, and all your beautiful diction does not serve for nothing.

PHIL. Well ! is that not another sample of her style ? *does not serve for nothing !*

BEL. O indocile brain ! With all the cares which we are incessantly taking, can we not teach you to speak congruously. In joining *not* to *nothing* you make a repetition, and there is, as you have been told, a negative too much.

MAR. Good Heavens ! I have¹⁴ not studied like you, and I speak straight out as they speak our way.

PHIL. Ah ! is it to be borne ?

BEL. What horrible solecism !

PHIL. It is enough to kill a sensitive ear.

BEL. Your mind must be very material, I confess. *I* is but a singular, while *have* in this case is a plural. Are you to offend against grammar all your life ?

MAR. Who says anything about offending grandmother or grandfather either ?¹⁵

PHIL. O Heavens !

BEL. Grammar is taken in the wrong sense by you, and I have already told you where the word comes from.

¹⁴ The original is *je avous*.

¹⁵ A play on the word *grammaire*, grammar ; and *grand'mère*, grandmother.

MAR. Upon my word ! it may come from Chaillot, Auteuil, or Pontoise, for all it matters to me.

BEL. What a loutish soul ! Grammar teaches us the laws of the verb and of the nominative, as well as of the adjective in connection with the substantive.

MAR. All I have to say, Madam, is that I do not know these people.

PHIL. What a martyrdom !

BEL. They are the names of words ; and one has to consider how they have to be made to agree together.

MAR. They may agree together, or tear each other to pieces, for what I care.¹⁶

PHIL. (*To Bélise*). Eh ! Good Heavens ! Finish this conversation. (*To Chrysale*). You will not, you, make her leave ?

CH. Yes, indeed. (*Aside*). I must give way to her whim. Go, do not irritate her ; retire, Martine.

PHIL. What ! You are afraid to offend the hussey ! You speak to her in quite an obliging tone !

CH. I ? Not at all. (*In a firm tone*). Come, you must go. (*In a more gentle tone*). Go, my poor child.

SCENE VII.—PHILAMINTE, CHRYSALE, BÉLISE.

CH. You are satisfied, and behold her gone ; but I do not at all approve of her being turned away. She is a girl who does her duty well, and you discard her for a trifling cause.

PHIL. Do you wish me to have her always in my service, to put my ears incessantly to the torture, to break every rule of custom and reason by a barbarous heap of errors in speech, mutilated words linked together, at intervals, by proverbs found in the gutters of the *Halles* ?¹⁷

BEL. It is true that it makes one hot to have to bear her conversations ; she tears Vaugelas to shreds every day ; and the least faults of this coarse mind are either a pleonasm, or cacophony.

CH. What does it matter that she fails in the laws of

¹⁶ This is partly taken from a comedy by Larivey, *le Fidèle*.

¹⁷ The *Halles* are the markets : hence these proverbs are something like Billingsgate language.

Vaugelas, provided she does not fail in the cooking? I would rather, I would, that in cleaning the vegetables she should make the verbs agree ill with the nouns, and say a hundred times a low or bad word, than that she should burn my meat or put too much salt in my soup; I live on good soup, and not on fine language. Vaugelas does not teach how to make a good soup, and Malherbe and Balzac, so learned in fine words, in cookery would perhaps have been real ninnies.

PHIL. How horribly this coarse conversation shocks one. And what indignity for him who calls himself a man to be for ever grovelling in material cares, instead of elevating himself to the spiritual! Is this body of ours, this rag, of sufficient importance, or valuable enough, to deserve that we should even think about it? And ought we not to put these things far from us?

CH. Yes, my body is myself, and I mean to take care of it. You may call it rag if you will, but my rag is dear to me.

BEL. The body with the mind is something, brother; but if you are to believe the whole of the learned world, the mind ought to take precedence of the body; and our greatest care, our first effort, ought to be to nourish it with the juice of science.

CH. Upon my word, if you wish to nourish your mind, it is with very empty ideas, according to what every one says, and you need have no care, no solicitude, to . . .

PHIL. Ah! *solicitude* sounds very roughly to my ear; it smacks strangely of its age.

BEL. It is true that the word is very old-fashioned.¹⁸

CH. Do you wish me to tell you? I shall have to burst out at last, take off the mask, and give way to my choler. You are called fools, and I take it much to heart . . .

PHIL. What now?

CH. (*To Bélise*). It is to you I am speaking, sister.

¹⁸ The original has *le mot est bien collet monté*. A *collet monté* was an old-fashioned ruff, in which pasteboard and wire were used to hold it up; therefore *Bélise* intends probably to say that the word "*solicitude*" was very old-fashioned. *Collet monté*, in speaking of persons, was generally used to denote people of either stilted, or also of those of staid and serious behaviour.

The least solecism in speech irritates you ; but you commit some strange ones in your conduct. Your everlasting books do not satisfy me ; and, with the exception of a large Plutarch to put my bands in ¹⁹ you ought to burn the whole of this useless trumpery, and leave science to the professors in town ; to do right, you should remove from the garret that long spyglass which frightens people, and a thousand other trifles, the sight of which annoys ; not try to find out what they are doing in the moon, and interest yourself a little more in what is being done at home, where we find everything going topsy-turvey. It is not very proper, and for several reasons, that a woman should study and know so many things. To train the minds of her children in good morals and manners, to superintend her household by keeping an eye on her servants, and to control the expenditure with economy, ought to be her study and philosophy. Our fathers, on this point, were very sensible, who said that a woman always knows enough as long as her mind rises to the level of knowing a doublet from a pair of breeches. Theirs did not read much, but they led a good life ; their households were all their learned occupations ; and their library, a thimble, thread, and needles, with which they worked at the outfit of their daughters. The women of the present age are far removed from these manners ; they wish to write and become authors. No science is too deep for them, and in this house more than in any other spot in this world ; the loftiest secrets are pried into, and everything is known in my home, except what ought to be known. They know the motions of the moon and the polar star, of Venus, of Saturn, and of Mars, with which I have no concern ; and in this vain learning, which is so far-fetched, my food, of which I stand so much in need, is neglected. My servants aspire to science in order to please you, and all neglect nothing so much as what they have to do. To argue is the occupation of the whole of my household, and argument banishes reason from it. The one burns my roast,

¹⁹ As the bands were starched and had to be kept straight, they were often put between the leaves of a big book, generally a folio. In the inventory taken after the death of Molière's mother, and in the one taken after his own death, there was a copy of Plutarch's works.

while reading some history ; the other dreams of verses, while I am asking for something to drink. In short, I see your example followed by them, and though I have servants, I am not served. One poor servant girl at least remained to me, whom this bad air had not infected, and behold her turned out with a great ado, because she fails to speak according to Vaugelas. I tell you, sister, that all these doings annoy me ; for it is to you, as I have told you, that I address myself. I do not care about all your people with their Latin in my house, and above all this Mr. Trissotin ; it is he, who with his verses, has made you ridiculous : all his talk is so much foolish trash. One has to look for what he has said after he has spoken ; and as for me, I believe him to be a little cracked.

PHIL. O Heavens ! what baseness of soul and language !

BEL. Can there be in a small body a more grovelling aggregate, a mind composed of more vulgar atoms ? And can I be of the same blood ? I mortally hate myself for belonging to your family ; and I quit the place in confusion.

SCENE VIII.—PHILAMINTE, CHRYSALE.

PHIL. Have you yet some other dart to level at me ?

CH. I ? No. Let us quarrel no longer ; it is over. Let us discourse of another matter. In your eldest daughter we perceive some aversion to the hymeneal knot ; she is in short a philosopher. I say nothing about it ; she is well ruled, and you act very well. But her younger sister is of quite a different disposition ; and I believe we should do well to provide and to choose for Henriette a husband . . .

PHIL. I have thought about it, and I shall communicate to you my intention. This Mr. Trissotin, who is so railed at, and who has not the honour of possessing your esteem, is the one whom I consider to be the husband that would suit her ; and I am a better judge of his merits than you are. To argue in this case is superfluous ; and my mind in this matter is quite made up. At least do not say a word about the choice of this husband ; I wish to speak to your daughter about it before you. I have rea-

sons to make my conduct approved of, and I shall know well enough if you have informed her.

SCENE IX.—ARISTE, CHRYSALE.

ARIS. Well! brother, your wife has left this moment, and I perceive quite well that you had just some conversation together.

CH. Yes.

ARIS. And with what success? Shall we have Henriette? Has she consented? Is the affair concluded?

CH. Not quite as yet.

ARIS. Does she refuse?

CH. No.

ARIS. Does she waver?

CH. In no way.

ARIS. What then?

CH. She proposes some one else for my son-in-law.

ARIS. Some one else for your son-in-law?

CH. Some one else.

ARIS. Whose name is . . .

CH. Mr. Trissotin.

ARIS. What! this Mr. Trissotin. . . .

CH. Yes, who is always talking verses and Latin.

ARIS. Have you accepted him?

CH. I, not all; Heaven forbid!

ARIS. What answer have you made?

CH. None; and right glad I am not to have spoken, so as not to bind myself.

ARIS. The reason is very nice; and you have taken a great step! Have you at least proposed Clitandre to her?

CH. No; for as I saw that there was a question of another son-in-law, I thought it better to let it alone.

ARIS. Certainly, your prudence is excessively rare. Are you not ashamed of your want of firmness? And is it possible for a man to be so weak as to leave his wife absolute power, and not dare to attack what she has resolved upon?

CH. Good Heavens! brother, you speak very easily of it, but you do not know how noise troubles me. I am very fond of rest, peace, and tranquillity, and my wife is terrible in her tempers. She greatly considers the name

of philosopher, but she is none the less choleric; and her morality, which affects to despise wealth, does not operate in the least on the sting of her anger. If in the slightest matter you oppose her will, a terrible tempest rages for a week afterwards. She makes me tremble the moment she assumes that tone; I do not know where to hide myself, for she is such a dragon; and nevertheless, with all her devilry, I am obliged to call her my heart and my love.²⁰

ARIS. Come, this is mere jest. Between ourselves, your wife has mastered you through your cowardice. Her power is based only on your weakness; it is from you that she takes the title of mistress; you allow yourself to give way to her haughtiness, and are led by the nose like a fool. What! cannot you, seeing what you are called, make up your mind for once to become a man, to bring down a woman to your wishes, and take sufficient courage to say, I will have it so! You will, without shame, allow your daughter to be sacrificed to the silly visions which are holding your family in bondage, and endow a booby with all your wealth in return for six words of Latin, which he spouts to them; a pedant, whom your wife at every turn addresses as a man of wit and a great philosopher, as a man who, in gallant poetry, never had his equal, and who is nothing of the sort, as every one knows. Come, once more, it is a jest; and your cowardice deserves to be laughed at.

CH. Yes, you are right, and I see that I am wrong. Come, I must at last show a firmer mind, brother.

ARIS. That is well said.

CH. It is an infamous thing to be thus under the sway of a woman.

ARIS. Very good.

CH. She has taken too great an advantage of my softness.

ARIS. It is true.

CH. Too much imposed upon my easy-going nature.

²⁰ These last words are an imitation of Plautus' *Casina*, or the *Stratagem Defeated* (Act ii., Scene 3), when Stalino, on seeing his wife Cleostrata, says: "I espy her standing there in gloominess. This plaguy baggage must be addressed by me with civility. (*Going towards her*). My own wife and my delight, what are you about?"

ARIS. Undoubtedly.

CH. And I will have her know this very day that my daughter is my daughter, and that I am the master, to take for her a husband who pleases me.

ARIS. Now you are reasonable, and as I wish you to be.

CH. You are for Clitandre, and know his address ; send him to me, brother, presently.

ARIS. I am going there directly.

CH. I have borne it too long, and I am going to be a man in spite of every one.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—PHILAMINTE, ARMANDE, BÉLISE, TRISSOTIN, LÉPINE.

PHIL. Ah ! let us seat ourselves here to listen at our ease to these verses which should be weighed word by word.

AR. I am burning to see them.

BEL. And we are dying for them.

PHIL. (*To Trisstoin*). Whatever comes from you has a charm for me.

AR. To me it is a matchless sweetness.

BEL. It is a dainty repast provided for my ears.

PHIL. Do not prolong such pressing desires.

AR. Pray hurry.

BEL. Be quick, and hasten our pleasures.

PHIL. Offer your epigram to our impatience.

TRIS. (*To Philaminte*). Alas ! it is but a new-born child, Madam : its fate may surely interest you ; and it is in your courtyard that I have been delivered of it.

PHIL. Its father is sufficient to make it dear to me.

TRIS. Your approbation may serve it as a mother.

BEL. What wit he has !

SCENE II.—HENRIETTE, PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE, ARMANDE, TRISSOTIN, LÉPINE.

PHIL. (*To Henriette, who is about to withdraw*). Hullo ! why do you run away ?

HEN. It is for fear of disturbing so sweet a conversation.

PHIL. Draw near, and come, intently, to take part in pleasure of hearing some marvels.

HEN. I know but little of the beauties of the people's writings, and things of wit are beyond me.

PHIL. It matters not. Afterwards, I have also to tell you a secret, of which it would be as well that you were informed.

TRIS. (*To Henriette*). Science has nothing that can inflame you, and your only pride is to know how to charm.

HEN. The one as little as the other; and I have not the least desire . . .

BEL. Come! let us see to the new-born child, pray.

PHIL. (*To Lépine*). Come, lad, quick, the wherewithal to seat ourselves. (*Lépine tumbles down*). Look at the awkward fellow! Ought people to fall after they have learned the equilibrium of things?

BEL. Do not you see the causes of your fall, Ignoramus, and that it proceeded from your deviation from the fixed point which we call the centre of gravity.

LEP. I became aware of it, Madam, when I was on the ground.

PHIL. (*To Lépine, who goes out*). The awkward booby!

TRIS. Well for him he was not made of glass.

AR. Ah! wit everywhere!

BEL. It never lags.

(*They sit down.*)

PHIL. Now promptly dish us up your amiable repast.

TRIS. For such great hunger as is shown to me, a dish of only eight verses seems very little; and I think that I shall do no harm here in joining to the epigram, or to the madrigal, the relish of a sonnet, which a certain princess thought rather delicate. It is seasoned with attic salt throughout, and I believe you will find it of sufficiently good taste.

AR. Ah! I do not doubt it.

PHIL. Let us give ear immediately.

BEL. (*Interrupting Trissotin each time he is ready to begin*). I feel my heart beat with pleasure beforehand. I love poetry to distraction, and especially when the verses are gallantly turned.

PHIL. If we are always speaking, he cannot say anything.

TRIS. *A son . . .*

BEL. (*To Henriette*). Silence, niece.²¹

TRIS. *A sonnet to the Princess Uranie, on her Ague.*²²

*Your prudence surely is asleep,
To treat and sumptuously to keep,
To lodge in state and luxury,
Your most hard-hearted enemy.*

BEL. Ah! what a charming beginning!

AR. How prettily he turns things!

PHIL. He alone possesses the talent for easy verses.

AR. To *prudence asleep* we must yield up our arms.

BEL. To *lodge an enemy* is for me full of charms.

PHIL. I like *sumptuously* and *state and luxury*, the joining of these last words does admirably.

BEL. Let us listen to the rest.

TRIS. *Your prudence surely is asleep,
To treat and sumptuously to keep,
To lodge in state and luxury,
Your most hard-hearted enemy.*

AR. *Prudence asleep!*

BEL. *To lodge an enemy!*

PHIL. *Sumptuously*, and *state and luxury!*

TRIS. *Whate'er be said, drive it away,
From 'neath your roof's splendid array,
Expel the ungrateful wretch, who would
Attack a life so fair, so good.*

BEL. Ah! gently; let me take breath, pray.

AR. Give us leisure to admire, if you please.

PHIL. One feels, at these verses, running at the bottom of one's heart, a something, I do not know what, that makes one feel faint.

AR. *Whate'er be said, drive it away,
From 'neath your roof's splendid array.*

How elegantly is *'neath your roof's splendid array* expressed; and how wittily the metaphor is put!

PHIL. *Whate'er be said, drive it away!* Ah! what an

²¹ Henriette has been saying nothing, yet Bélise, who talks continually, says "Silence."

²² This sonnet is to be found in *The Gallant Works, in prose and in verse, of Mr. Cotin*, Paris, 1663, and is called, *A Sonnet to Mademoiselle de Longueville, now Duchess of Nemours, on her quartan ague.*

admirable taste is displayed in this *drive it away*. This, in my opinion, is an invaluable passage.

AR. My heart is likewise smitten with *whate'er be said*.

BEL. I am of your opinion, *whate'er be said* is a happy expression.

AR. I would like to have written it.

BEL. It is worth a whole piece.

PHIL. But is the *finesse* of it really understood, as I do?

AR. AND BEL. Oh! oh!

PHIL. *Whate'er be said, drive it away*. Though people should take the *ague's* part, do not pay any heed, laugh at the babbling. *Whate'er be said, drive it away, whate'er be said, whate'er be said*. This *whate'er be said* has more in it than it seems to have. As for me, I do not know, if everyone resembles me; but I perceive a million words beneath it.

BEL. It is true, it says more things than it appears to do.

PHIL. (*To Trissotin*). But when you wrote this charming *whate'er be said*, did you yourself comprehend all its energy? Did you yourself reflect upon all which it conveys to us? And did you at that time think of putting so much wit in it?

TRIS. Eh! Eh!

AR. I have also my head full of *the ungrateful wretch*, that ungrateful *ague*, unjust, unmannerly, which treats people ill who give it a lodging.

PHIL. In short, the quatrains are both admirable. Let us come quickly to the triplets, pray.

AR. Ah! if you please, once more *whate'er be said*.

TRIS. *Whate'er be said, drive it away*.

PHIL., AR., AND BEL. *Whate'er be said!*

TRIS. *From 'neath your roof's splendid array . . .*

PHIL., AR., AND BEL. *Your roof's splendid array! . . .*

TRIS. *To expel the ungrateful wretch that could . . .*

PHIL., AR., AND BEL. This *ungrateful fever!*

TRIS. *Attack a life so fair, so good.*

PHIL. *A life so fair, so good.*

AR. AND BEL. Ah!

TRIS. *What! not respecting your high rank,
Your noble blood it basely drank.*

PHIL., AR., AND BEL. Ah!

TRIS. *And day and night insults you so!
If with it to the baths you go
Without your making more ado,
With your own hands then drown it too.*

PHIL. We are exhausted.

BEL. We swoon.

AR. We die with pleasure.

PHIL. It gives one a thousand gentle shiverings.

AR. *If with it to the baths you go.*

BEL. *Without your making more ado.*

PHIL. *With your own hands then drown it too. With
your own hands, then, with your own hands, then drown
it too.*

AR. At every step one encounters a charming trait in
your verses.

BEL. Everywhere we wander there delighted

PHIL. One can light upon nothing but fine things in
them.

AR. They are small paths all strewn with roses.

TRIS. The sonnet then seems to you . . .

PHIL. Admirable, new; and no one has ever made any-
thing so fine.

BEL. (*To Henriette*). What! were you not touched on
hearing this? You made but a sorry figure, niece.

HEN. Each one makes here below the figure that one
can make, aunt; and it is not sufficient to wish to become
a wit, in order to be one.

TRIS. Perhaps my verses are troublesome to this lady.

HEN. Not at all. I do not listen to them.

PHIL. Ah! let us have the epigram.

TRIS. *On a coach of an amarant colour given to a lady
of his acquaintance.*²³

PHIL. The very names of his pieces have always some-
thing peculiar.

AR. Their novelty prepares one for a hundred fine
strokes of wit.

²³ This epigram is in the same volume as the sonnet mentioned before,
and bears nearly the same title as the sonnet of Trissotin.

TRIS. *Love has so dearly sold me to his chains.*

PHIL., AR., AND BEL. Ah!

TRIS. *That half of my estate only remains;
And when this beauteous couch you shall behold,
On which there are embossed such heaps of gold,
That all the country wonders at the ride,
And makes my Lais triumph in her pride.*

PHIL. Ah! my Lais! There is erudition!

BEL. The disguise is pretty, and worth a million.

TRIS. *And when this beauteous couch you shall behold,
On which there are embossed such heaps of gold,
That all the country wonders at the ride,
And makes my Lais triumph in her pride,
No longer say 'tis amarant,
Say rather that it is my land.*

AR. Oh! oh! oh! that was not at all expected.

PHIL. Only he could write in such taste.

BEL. *No longer say 'tis amarant,
Say rather that it is my land,
This may be declined, my land, of my land, to my
land.*²⁴

PHIL. I know not whether my mind was prepossessed in your favour, from the moment I knew you; but I admire everywhere your verse and your prose.

TRIS. (*To Philaminte*). If you would show us something of your own, we in our turn might also admire.

PHIL. I have written nothing in verse; but I have reason to hope that I shall soon be able to show you, as among friends, eight chapters of the plan of our academy. Plato foolishly stopped at this project, when he wrote the treatise upon his Republic; but I shall carry out the idea which I have arranged in prose upon paper. For, in short, I feel strangely annoyed at the wrong which they do us with regard to wit; and I wish to vindicate ourselves, that is my whole sex, from the unworthy class in which men place us, by confining our talents to trifling things, and by closing against us the entrance to sublime lights.

²⁴ The original has *Ne dis plus qu'il est amarante, dis plutôt qu'il est de ma rente*, on which Bélise justly remarks, "this may be declined *ma rente, de ma rente, à ma rente.*"

AR. It is giving too great an offence to our sex to extend the effort of our intelligence no farther than to judge about a skirt, or the shape of a mantle, or the beauties of a piece of lace, or of a new brocade.

BEL. We must rise from this shameful condition, and openly set our genius at liberty.

TRIS. My respect for the ladies at all times is well known ; and, if I render homage to the brilliancy of their eyes, I also honour the light of their intelligence.

PHIL. The sex likewise does you justice on this point ; but we wish to show to certain wits, whose proud knowledge treats us with disdain, that women are also endowed with learning ; that, like them, they can hold learned assemblies, conducted by better rules ; inasmuch as they wish to unite what they separate elsewhere,²⁵ join fine language to the higher sciences, explore nature by a thousand experiments, and upon any question that may be proposed, bring in each sect, and espouse the opinions of none.

TRIS. For order, I hold by peripateticism.²⁶

PHIL. For abstractions, I love platonism.

AR. Epicurus pleases me, and his dogmas are strong.

BEL. I accommodate myself sufficiently well to the atomic system ; but I think a vacuum is difficult to be endured, and I relish the subtle matter much better.

TRIS. As for the properties of the magnet, Descartes agrees with my opinion.

AR. I am fond of his vortices.

PHIL. I, of his falling worlds.

AR. I am anxious to see our assembly opened, and that we should signalize ourselves by some discovery.

TRIS. We expect much from your enlightened opinions ; for nature has few things that are dark to you.

PHIL. As for me, without flattering myself, I have already made one, and I have clearly seen men in the moon.

BEL. I have not seen men as yet, as I think ; but I have seen steeples as clearly as I see you.

AR. We shall probe grammar, history, poetry, moral philosophy, and politics, as well as physics.

²⁵ An allusion to the French Academy, founded in 1633, and the Academy of Sciences, founded in 1666.

²⁶ That is the doctrine of Aristotle.

PHIL. Moral philosophy has charms by which my heart is smitten; and it was formerly the passion of great minds; but I yield the palm to the Stoics, and I find nothing so beautiful as their wise men.

AR. As for the language, they shall see our regulations in a little time, and we pretend to make some revolutions.²⁷ Through antipathy, either just or natural, we have each of us conceived a mortal hatred for a number of words, whether verbs, or nouns which we mutually abandon. Against them we are preparing deadly sentences, and we design to open our learned conferences by the proscription of all those divers words of which we wish to purge both prose and poetry.²⁸

PHIL. But the most beautiful project of our academy, a noble enterprise, with which I am delighted, a design full of glory, and which shall be lauded among all the great minds of posterity, is the retrenching of these filthy syllables which cause a scandal in the finest words, these eternal playthings of the fools of all times, these nauseous commonplaces of our sorry jokers, these sources of a mass of infamous equivocations with which they insult the modesty of women.

TRIS. These are certainly admirable projects.

BEL. You shall see our statutes when they shall be made.

TRIS. All are certain to be beautiful and wise.

AR. We shall be, by our laws, the judges of works; by our laws, prose and verse, everything shall be submitted to us. No one shall have any wit beyond ourselves and friends.²⁹ We shall seek everywhere to find something to cavil at, and shall see none but ourselves able to write well.

²⁷ The *précieuses* really held dissertations about the language, and first brought into use many energetic phrases, and the present orthography.

²⁸ Several members of the Academy intended to banish from the French language such words as *car*, *encore*, *néanmoins*, *pourquoi*, and several others.

²⁹ This saying, *Nul n'aura de l'esprit, hors nous et nos amis*, has become proverbial, and seems to be aimed at Ménage and his *clique*.

SCENE III.—PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE, ARMANDE, HENRIETTE, TRISSOTIN, LÉPINE.

LEP. (*To Trissotin*). A man is there, Sir, who wishes to speak to you; he is dressed in black, and speaks in a soft tone. (*They rise.*)

TRIS. It is that learned friend who has pressed me so much to procure him the honour of your acquaintance.

PHIL. You have our full consent to introduce him.

(*Trissotin goes to meet Vadius.*)

SCENE IV.—PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE, ARMANDE, HENRIETTE.

Phil. (*To Armande and to Bélise*). Let us do well the honours at least of our wit. (*To Henriette, who wishes to go*). Hullo! I have told you very distinctly that I want you.

HEN. But for what?

PHIL. Come hither; we shall let you know shortly.

SCENE V.—TRISSOTIN, VADIUS, PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE, ARMANDE, HENRIETTE.

TRIS. (*Presenting Vadius*). Behold the man who is dying to see you. In introducing him here I do not fear being blamed for having admitted a profane among you, Madam. He can hold his own amongst the wits.

PHIL. The hand that presents him is sufficient guarantee.

TRIS. He has a perfect knowledge of the old authors, and he knows Greek, Madam, as well as any man in France.

PHIL. (*To Bélise*). Greek, O Heavens! Greek! He knows Greek, sister!

BEL. (*To Armande*). Ah! niece, Greek!

ARM. Greek! how charming!

PHIL. What! This gentleman knows Greek! Ah! permit me, pray, that, for the love of Greek, Sir, I embrace you. (*Vadius embraces Bélise and Armande also.*)

HEN. (*To Vadius, who wishes to embrace her also*). Excuse me, Sir, I do not understand Greek.

(*They sit down.*)

PHIL. I have a marvellous respect for Greek books.

VAD. I fear that, through the anxiety which prompts



Hersent p^l

Chevalier ac^t

THE LEARNED LADIES.

Act III sc. 5.



me to pay you my respects to-day, Madam, I am intruding; and that I shall be disturbing some learned conversation.

PHIL. With Greek, Sir, nothing can be spoilt.

TRIS. Besides, he does wonders in verse as well as prose, and could, if he would, show you something.

VAD. The fault of authors is to tyrannize in conversation with their productions; in being at the *Palais*³⁰ in public³¹ walks, at the *ruelles*, at table the indefatigable reciters of their own tiresome verses. As for me, I see nothing more absurd, according to my opinion, than an author who goes begging everywhere for incense, who, catching the ears of the first comers, often makes them the martyrs of his vigils. I have never had this foolish hobby; and I am, on this subject, of the opinion of a Greek who, by an express dogma, forbids all his followers the undignified eagerness of reading their own works. Here are some small verses for young lovers, upon which I should like to have your opinions.

TRIS. Your verses have charms which no others have.

VAD. The Graces and Venus reign in all yours.

TRIS. Your turn is unconstrained, and you choose your words well.

VAD. Throughout all your works the *ithos* and *pathos*³² are seen.

TRIS. We have had some eclogues from you, which surpass in sweet charms Theocritus and Virgil.³³

VAD. Your odes have a noble ring, gallant and sweet, which leave Horace very far behind.³⁴

TRIS. Is there aught more amorous than your little songs?

VAD. Is there anything to equal your sonnets?

TRIS. There is nothing so charming as your little *rondeaux*.

VAD. Nothing so full of wit as your madrigals.

³⁰ See page 433, note 8.

³¹ The original has *Cours*.

³² These are terms of rhetoric borrowed from the Greek; the first means *morals*, the second *feeling*.

³³ Ménage wrote some eclogues which had a certain reputation.

³⁴ This mutual flattery of Trissotin and Vadius has been suggested by a passage from Erasmus' *Praise of Folly*.

TRIS. In the ballads, above all, you are admirable.

VAD. And in *bouts-rimés* I think you adorable.³⁵

TRIS. If France could but know your worth.

VAD. If the age did but render justice to men of wit.

TRIS. In a gilded coach you would pass through the streets.

VAD. We should see the public erect statues to you (*to Trissotin*). Hm! it is a ballad, and I should like you to tell me plainly. . . .

TRIS. (*To Vadius*). Have you seen a little sonnet on the ague which has attacked the princess Uranie.³⁶

VAD. Yes; it was read to me yesterday in a certain company.

TRIS. Do you know the author of it?

VAD. No; but I know well enough that, not to flatter him, his sonnet is worth nothing.

TRIS. Many people think it admirable, however.

VAD. That does not prevent it from being very wretched; and if you had read it, you would be of my way of thinking.

TRIS. I know that I should differ with you on this subject, and that few people are capable of such a sonnet.

VAD. Heaven preserve me from writing such!

TRIS. I maintain that nothing better could be written; and my great reason is, that I am the author of it.

VAD. You?

TRIS. I.

VAD. I do not know then how the affair happened.

TRIS. It is that I was not fortunate enough to be able to please you.

VAD. I must have been absent-minded in listening to it, or the reader must have spoilt me the sonnet.³⁷ But let us drop the subject and look to my ballad.

³⁵ *Bouts-rimés* are verses in which the final words were given first, and which had then to be filled up.

³⁶ Trissotin and Vadius are both anxious to shine before the ladies, and as soon as the latter wishes to read his ballad, the former begins to speak of his sonnet.

³⁷ Madame de Sévigné mentions in one of her letters a similar fact, how Louis XIV. deceived an old courtier, the Marshal de Grammont, by asking his opinion about a madrigal, which the king pretended to think rather feeble. De Grammont thought it wretched, and was quite dumbfounded when Louis told him that he was himself the author of it.

TRIS. A ballad, to my taste, is an insipid thing; it is no longer the fashion; it smacks of ancient times.

VAD. The ballad, however, charms many people.

TRIS. That does not prevent it from displeasing me.

VAD. It remains none the worse for that.

TRIS. It has wondrous charms for certain pedants.

VAD. And yet we see that it does not please you.

TRIS. You foolishly attribute your own qualities to others. *(They all rise.)*

VAD. You throw yours at me very impertinently.

TRIS. Go along, you little dunce, you pitiful scribbler.

VAD. Go along, you doggerel rhymester,³⁸ you disgrace of the profession.

TRIS. Go along, you second-hand verse-dealer, you impudent plagiarist.

VAD. Go along, you numbskull . . .

PHIL. He! gentlemen, what are you about?

TRIS. *(To Vadius)*. Go, go, and make restitution of your shameful larcenies which the Greeks and Latins claim from you.³⁹

VAD. Go, go, and do penance to Parnassus, for having maimed Horace with your verses.

TRIS. Remember your book, and the little stir it caused.

VAD. And you, your publisher reduced to the hospital.

TRIS. My fame is established; you attack it in vain.

VAD. Yes, yes; I refer you to the author of the Satires.

TRIS. I refer you also to him.

VAD. I have the satisfaction of people seeing that he has treated me more honourably. He gives me a slight dig,⁴⁰ by the way, among many authors who are esteemed at the *Palais*; but he never leaves you in peace in his verses, and we find you a butt for his arrows throughout.

TRIS. It is by this that I hold the more honourable rank. He places you among the crowd like a miserable being; he thinks one blow enough to knock you down, and

³⁸ The original has *rimeur de balle*, because things of inferior quality were called *marchandises de balle*, from *balle*, a hawker's bale.

³⁹ Ménage is said to have pilfered a great deal from the ancients.

⁴⁰ Boileau has attacked Ménage only once, and that slightly, in his fourth satire.

has never done you the honour to repeat it. But he attacks me apart as a noble adversary, against whom all his efforts seem necessary; and his blows, repeated against me everywhere, show that he never believes himself certain of the victory.

VAD. My pen shall teach you what sort of a man I can be.

TRIS. And mine will make you see your master.

VAD. I defy you in verse, prose, Greek, and Latin.

TRIS. Well! we shall see each other alone at Barbin.⁴¹

SCENE VI.—TRISSOTIN, PHILAMINTE, ARMANDE, BÉLISE, HENRIETTE.

TRIS. Do not blame me for giving way to my temper; it is your judgment which I defend, Madam, in the sonnet which he has had the audacity to attack.

PHIL. It shall be my care to reconcile you. But let us speak of something else. Draw near, Henriette. For a long time my heart has been uneasy, because I could never perceive any trace of wit in you; but I have found the means of making you have some.

HEN. You take pains for me which are unnecessary; learned conversations are not at all in my way: I love to live at ease; and, in whatever is said, one must take too much trouble to become clever; it is an ambition which does not at all enter my mind. I find myself very well, mother, in being stupid; and I prefer having nothing but common-place talk to tormenting myself to say fine words.

PHIL. Yes; but I am hurt at it, and it does not suit me to bear, in my own family, such a disgrace. Beauty of countenance is but a frail ornament, a transitory flower, the dazzle of a moment, which exists but in the epidermis; but that of the mind is inherent and firm. I have, therefore, long looked for some way to give you that beauty which years cannot reap, to inspire you with a love for learning, and to instil into you a desire for fine knowledge; and, in short, the thought to which my wishes

⁴¹ Barbin was one of the chief booksellers of the time, and his shop was at the *Palais*.

tended, is to attach to you a man replete with intelligence. (*Pointing to Trissotin*). And that man is this gentleman, whom I command you to look upon as the husband whom my choice intends for you.

HEN. I! mother?

PHIL. Yes, you. Play the fool a little.

BEL. (*To Trissotin*). I understand you: your eyes demand my consent to pledge elsewhere a heart which I possess. Go, I am willing. To this bond I surrender you; it is a union that will be the making of you.

TRIS. (*To Henriette*). I do not know what to say to you in my delight, Madam; and this union, with which I see myself honoured, puts me . . .

HEN. Gently, Sir; it is not yet concluded: do not hurry yourself so much.

PHIL. How you answer! Do you know that . . . ? Enough. You understand me. (*To Trissotin*). She will be sensible. Come, let us leave her.

SCENE VII.—HENRIETTE, ARMANDE

AR. We see shining forth our mother's care for you; and she could not have chosen a more illustrious husband . . .

HEN. If the choice be so fine, why do not you take it?

AR. It is to you, not to me, that his hand is given.

HEN. I surrender it all, as to my elder sister.

AR. If wedlock were invested with any charm for me, as it is for you, I should accept your offer with delight.

HEN. If I had, like you, my head full of pedants, I should think him a very decent match.

AR. Though our tastes in this may be different, we ought, however, to obey our parents, sister. A mother has an absolute power over us; and you believe in vain, by your resistance . . .

SCENE VIII.—CHRYSALE, ARISTE, CLITANDRE, HENRIETTE, ARMANDE.

CH. (*To Henriette, presenting Clitandre to her*). Come, daughter, you must approve my design. Take off your glove. Take this gentleman's hand, and henceforth consider him in your heart, as a man whose wife I wish you to be.

AR. On this side your likings are very strong, sister.

HEN. We must obey our parents, sister. A father has absolute power over our wishes.

AR. A mother has her claim to our obedience.

CH. What does it mean?

AR. I say that I apprehend much that on this my mother and you will not agree; and that it is another husband . . .

CH. Hold your tongue, you saucy jade; go and have your fill at philosophizing with her; and do not concern yourself with my actions. Tell her my mind, and take care to warn her not to come and pester my ears. Go quickly.

SCENE IX.—CHRYSALE, ARISTE, HENRIETTE, CLITANDRE.

ARI. Very good. You have done wonders.

CLI. What transport! what joy! Ah, how sweet is my lot!

CH. (*To Clitandre*). Come, take her hand, and go before us; conduct her to her room. Ah! the sweet caresses! (*To Ariste*). There, my heart leaps at all these tender signs; it makes my old days feel young again, and I look back upon my youthful love affairs.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—PHILAMINTE, ARMANDE.

AR. Yes, nothing has kept her mind in check; she is proud of her obedience. Scarcely has her heart given itself time to receive the order in my presence before it surrendered, and seemed less to follow the wishes of a father than affect to defy the orders of a mother.

PHIL. I shall soon show her to whose orders the laws of reason subject her wishes, and who is to control, her mother or her father, the mind or the body, the form or the matter.

AR. The compliment of it was, at least, due to you: and this little gentleman behaves strangely in wishing to become your son-in-law, in spite of you.

PHIL. He is not there yet where his heart aspires to be. I thought him well enough, and I looked with pleasure on your love-affairs; but he has always displeased me in his way of acting. He knew, Heaven be thanked, that I was an author; and yet he never asked me to read anything to him.

SCENE II.—CLITANDRE, *entering softly, and listening without being seen*, ARMANDE, PHILAMINTE.

AR. I should not allow, if I were you, that he should ever become the husband of Henriette. It would be doing me a great wrong to imagine that I speak about this as an interested girl, and that the scurvy trick which he plays me produces some secret spite at the bottom of my heart. Against such blows the soul is strengthened by the solid assistance of philosophy, and through her we may place ourselves above everything; but to treat you thus is to drive you to extremes. It becomes your honour to oppose his wishes; and he is a man, in short, who ought not to please you. Between ourselves, I never knew that in his inmost heart he had any esteem for you.

PHIL. The little fool!

AR. Whatever praises were uttered about you, he always seemed like ice when it came to lauding you.

PHIL. The coarse man!

AR. And twenty times I have read him, as a novelty, some of your verses which he did not like.

PHIL. The impertinent fellow!

AR. We often quarrelled about it; and you would not believe how much nonsense . . .

CLI. (*To Armande*). Eh! gently, pray. A little charity, Madam, or, at least, a little honesty. What harm have I done to you? and what is my offence, to have all your eloquence up in arms against me? to wish to destroy me, and to take so much trouble in making me odious with people of whom I stand in need? Speak, say, whence comes this terrible anger? I have no objection that this lady should honestly judge between us.

AR. If I harboured this anger of which you wish to accuse me, I should find sufficient to justify it. You but too well deserve it; and a first love establishes such sacred

rights upon the heart, that sooner than burn with the flame of another passion, one should lose one's fortune, and renounce life. Nothing equals the horror of a change in love; and every faithless heart is a monster in morality.

CLI. Do you account it an infidelity, Madam, to do what the pride of your heart has commanded me? I only obey its commands; and, if I offend you, that alone is the cause of it. Your charms at first possessed my whole heart; it burned constantly for two years; no assiduous attentions, duties, respects, services, but what it sacrificed lovingly to you. All my affection, all my attentions, avail nothing with you; I find you opposed to my sweetest aspirations. What you refuse, I offer to another. Now judge. Is it, Madam, my fault or yours? Does my heart run after change, or does yours goad me to it? Is it I who leaves you, or you who drives me away?

AR. Do you call it being opposed to your desires, Sir, to deprive them of what was vulgar in them, and to wish to reduce them to that purity wherein consists the beauty of perfect love? You cannot for me keep your thoughts clear and disentangled from the commerce of the senses; and do you not taste, as its sweetest charms, this union of hearts, in which the bodies are not concerned. You cannot love except with a gross love, and with all its train of material bonds: and, to feed the flames produced in your heart, a marriage and all its sequel is necessary. Ah! what strange love, and how far removed are noble souls from burning with such terrestrial flames! The senses have no share in all their ardours; and this lovely fire unites nought but hearts. It leaves the rest as an unworthy matter; it is a fire, pure and clear as the heavenly fire; one utters nought but virtuous sighs, and does not tend towards filthy desires. Nothing impure is mixed with the proposed aim; one loves for the sake of love, and for nothing else; it is to the mind only that all transports are directed, and one never perceives that one has a body.

CLI. As for me, to my misfortune, Madam, I perceive but too plainly that I have a body as well as a soul; I feel that it sticks too closely to it to leave it aside. I do not

know the art of these separations ; Heaven has denied me this philosophy, and my body and soul go together. There is nothing more beautiful, as you have observed, than these purified desires, which regard the mind only, this union of hearts, and these tender thoughts so disentangled from the commerce of the senses. But for me such affections are too subtle ; I am somewhat gross, as you accuse me ; I love with my whole self, and the love with which I am inspired, is meant, I confess, for the whole person. This is not a matter for very great punishments ; and, without wronging your fine sentiments, I perceive that in the world my method is greatly followed, and that marriage is much the fashion, and that it passes for a sufficiently sweet and honourable tie, for me to have desired to become your husband, without the liberty of such a thought giving you the least reason for being offended.

AR. Well ! Sir, well ! since your coarse sentiments wish to gratify themselves, without listening to me ; since, to induce you to remain faithful, there must be carnal bonds, corporeal chains, if my mother wishes it, I shall make up my mind to consent for your sake to what we were speaking of.

CLI. It is too late, Madam, another has taken your place ; and it would ill become me to repay in such a manner the protection, and wound the kindness that sheltered me against your pride.

PHIL. But in short, Sir, do you count upon my consent when you contemplate this other marriage ? and, if you please, do you imagine, that I have another husband quite ready for Henriette ?

CLI. Eh ! Madam, consider your choice, I pray ; expose me, I beseech you, to less ignominy, and do not consign me to the humbling lot of seeing myself the rival of Mr. Trissotin. The love of wits, which makes you thwart me, cannot oppose me a less noble adversary. There are many men, whom the bad taste of the age has given credit for being wits ; but Mr. Trissotin has not been able to dupe any one, and all do justice to the writings which he gives us. Except here, he is valued everywhere at his real worth ; and what has a score of times astonished me, is to find you exalt to the skies silly verses which you

would have disavowed, if you had made them yourself.

PHIL. If you judge him altogether otherwise than we, it is because we see him with other eyes than yours.

SCENE III.—TRISSOTIN, PHILAMINTE, ARMANDE, CLITANDRE.

TRIS. (*To Philaminte*). I have come to tell you a great piece of news. We have, Madam, while sleeping, had a narrow escape. A world has passed along by us, has fallen across our vortex, and, if it had on its way met with our earth, it would have been broken into pieces, like glass.⁴²

PHIL. Let us remit this conversation to another opportunity. This gentleman would find neither rhyme nor reason in it; he professes to love ignorance, and above all to hate wit and learning.

CLI. This truth requires some qualification. I shall explain myself, Madam; and I hate only the wit and learning that spoil people. They are things which, in themselves, are good and great; but I should prefer being in the rank of those who are ignorant to being learned like certain persons.

TRIS. For my part, I do not think that learning can spoil anything, whatever may be supposed.

CLI. And it is my opinion, that in facts as well as in conversations, science often makes great fools.

TRIS. That is a great paradox.

CLI. Without being very clever, the proof of it would, I think, be very easy to me. If reasons failed, I am sure that in any case famous examples would not fail me.

TRIS. You might quote some which would prove hardly anything.

CLI. I should not have far to go to find what I want.

TRIS. For my part, I do not see those famous examples.

CLI. As for me, I see them so plainly, that they stare me in the face.

TRIS. I have hitherto believed that it was ignorance which made great fools, and not learning.

⁴² Cotin had published a very long dissertation, called *A Gallantry about the Comet which appeared in December 1664, and January 1665*.

CLI. You have believed very wrongly, and I will be bound that a learned fool is more foolish than an ignorant fool.

TRIS. Common opinion is against your maxims, since ignorant and fool are synonymous terms.

CLI. If you will take it according to the use of the word, the affinity is greater between pedant and fool.

TRIS. Folly, in the one, appears perfectly pure.

CLI. And study, in the other, adds to nature.

TRIS. Learning in itself has eminent merit.

CLI. Learning in a fop becomes impertinent.

TRIS. Ignorance must have great charms for you, since you take up arms so eagerly in its defence.

CLI. If ignorance has such great charms for me, it is since I have seen certain learned men.

TRIS. Those certain learned men may, when they are known, be worth certain other people who are not far off.

CLI. Yes, if certain learned people were to be judges; but would people agree to it?

PHIL. (*To Clitandre*). It seems to me, sir . . .

CLI. Eh! Madam, pray; this gentleman is strong enough without you coming to his aid. I have already too formidable an assailant, and if I defend myself, I only do so by retreating.

AR. But the offensive sharpness of each repartee of which you. . .

CLI. Another second! I give up the game.

PHIL. We allow these kinds of combats in conversation, provided the person be not attacked.

CLI. Eh, good Heavens! all this has nothing in it to offend him; he understands raillery as well as any man in France; and he has felt himself goaded with many other points, without his glory ever doing aught but smiling at it.⁴³

TRIS. I am not astonished to see this gentleman set forth the thesis in the combat which I maintain; he is much at court, that is saying everything. The court, it is well known, does not stand up for wit. It has some in-

⁴³ The Abbé Cotin was pretty quarrelsome, and had had many literary disputes.

terest in supporting ignorance, Madam; and it is as a courtier that he takes up its defence.

CLI. You are very hard upon this poor court; and its misfortune is great to find you gentlemen of wit every day declaiming against it; laying all your annoyances at its door, and quarrelling with it upon its bad taste, accusing no one but it upon your ill success. Permit me to tell you, Mr. Trissotin, with all the respect with which your name inspires me, that you and your brethren would do very well to speak of the court in somewhat gentler tones; and that, after all, it is not so silly as you and these other gentlemen imagine; that it has common sense to judge of everything; that some good taste may be formed there, and that the knowledge of the world which is there displayed is, without flattery, worth all the obscure learning of pedantry.

TRIS. Of its good taste, Sir, we behold the effects.

CLI. Where, Sir, do you see that it is so bad?

TRIS. What do I see, Sir? Is it that as regards learning Rastus and Baldus are an honour to France; and that all their merit, clear as day, attracts neither the eyes nor the gifts of the court.

CLI. I perceive your annoyance, Sir, and that, from modesty, you do not place yourself among them; and, not to bring you therefore into the question, what do these able heroes do for the state? in what way are their writings of any service to it to accuse the court of a horrible injustice, and complain everywhere that it fails to bestow the favour of its gifts on their learned names? Their learning is very necessary to France! and the court cares much about the books which they write! Three beggarly fellows take it into their narrow heads, that if they are only printed and bound in calf they are important persons in the state; that with their pens they shape the destiny of crowns, that at the slightest rumour of their productions, pensions ought to come flying to them; that the universe has its eyes on them; that the glory of their name is bruited about everywhere; and that they are famous prodigies in learning, because they know what others have said before them, because they have had eyes and ears for the last thirty years, and because they have spent nine

or ten thousand nights in confusing themselves with Greek and Latin, and loading their minds with the unintelligible booty of all the old trash that lies scattered about in books. People who always seem drunk with their learning; have no other merit than an abundance of troublesome talk; good for nothing, void of common sense, and full of a ridicule and an impertinence to decry everywhere wit and learning.

PHIL. Your warmth is great; and this violence marks the movement of nature in you. It is the name of rival which excites in your heart . . .

SCENE IV.—TRISSOTIN, PHILAMINTE, CLITANDRE,
ARMANDE, JULIEN.

JUL. The learned gentleman who just now paid you a visit, and whose humble servant I have the honour to be, requests you to read this note.

PHIL. However important the letter may be which I am desired to read, know, friend, that it is a piece of rudeness to come to interrupt people in the midst of a conversation; and that as a servant who knows how to behave, you should have recourse to the people of the house to be introduced.

JUL. I shall note that down in my book, Madam.

PHIL. (Reads). "*Trissotin has boasted, Madam, that he is to marry your daughter. Let me inform you that his philosophy aims only at your wealth, and that you would do well not to conclude this marriage until you have read the poem which I am composing against him. Whilst this sketch is preparing, in which I mean to depict him in all his colours, I send you Horace, Virgil, Terence and Catullus, where you will see noted down on the margin all the passages which he has pillaged.*"

On account of this intended marriage, a man of merit is attacked by many enemies; and this very villifying induces me to-day to do an action which shall confound envy, and make it feel that its efforts accelerate the execution of that which it wishes to undo. (*To Julien*). Let your master immediately know this; and tell him that to show what great store I set on his noble counsels, and how worthy I think them of being acted upon, this very evening I marry him (*Pointing to Trissotin*), to my daughter.

SCENE V.—PHILAMINTE, ARMANDE, CLITANDRE.

PHIL. (*To Clitandre*). You, Sir, as a friend of the whole family, may assist at the signing of the contract; and I wish to invite you to it. Armande, take care to send for the notary, and to inform your sister of the business.

AR. There is no need to inform my sister; this gentleman here will charge himself with the trouble of running and carrying her the news very soon, and of disposing her heart to be rebellious against you.

PHIL. We shall see who will have the greatest power over her, and if I shall be able to bring her to her duty.

SCENE VI.—ARMANDE, CLITANDRE.

AR. I regret much to see, Sir, that matters do not altogether turn out as you wished.

CLI. I am going to set about it zealously, Madam, so as not to leave you so much regret in your heart.

AR. I am afraid that your efforts will not have too good a result.

CLI. Perhaps you will not see your fear realized.

AR. I hope so.

CLI. I am convinced of it, and that I shall be assisted by your support.

AR. Yes, I am going to serve you with all my might.

CLI. And this service is sure of my gratitude.

SCENE VII.—CHRYSALE, ARISTE, HENRIETTE,
CLITANDRE.

CLI. Without your support, I should be unhappy; your wife has rejected my addresses, and in her prejudiced heart wishes Trissotin for her son-in-law.

CH. But what fancy has she got hold of? Why the deuce does she wish for this Mr. Trissotin?

ARI. It is because his name has the honour of rhyming with Latin, that he gains an advantage over his rival.

CLI. She wishes to conclude this marriage this very evening.

CH. This evening?

CLI. This evening.

CH. And this evening, I have made up my mind to marry you two, to thwart her.

CLI. She has sent for the notary to draw up the contract.

CH. And I am going to fetch him for the one he is to draw up.

CLI. (*Pointing to Henriette*). And this lady ought to be informed by her sister of the marriage to which they wish her to consent.

CH. And I command her, with plenary power, to prepare her hand for this other union. Ah! I will show if there be another master than myself in my house, to lay down the law. (*To Henriette*). We are coming back, take care to wait for us. Come, follow me, brother, and you also, son-in-law.

HEN. (*To Ariste*). Alas! try to keep him always in this humour.

ARI. I shall do everything to serve your love.

SCENE VIII.—HENRIETTE, CLITANDRE.

CLI. Whatever powerful aid he promises to my flame, my greatest hope is in your heart, Madam.

HEN. As for my heart, you may be assured of that.

CLI. I cannot but be happy, when I have its support.

HEN. You see to what marriage they attempt to compel it.

CLI. As long as it shall be mine, I see nothing to fear.

HEN. I am going to try everything to see our sweetest wishes fulfilled; and if all my efforts do not make me yours, there exists a retreat where the soul can fly to, and which shall prevent me from belonging to any other person.

CLI. May a just Heaven forfend that I should ever receive such a proof of your affection!

ACT V.

SCENE I.—HENRIETTE, TRISSOTIN.

HEN. It is about the marriage for which my mother is preparing that I wished, Sir, to talk to you face-to-face;

and I thought that in the trouble in which I see the whole household plunged, I might make you listen to reason. I know that you expect me to bring you a considerable marriage portion ; but money, of which so many people are fond, has only charms unworthy of a real philosopher ; and the contempt for wealth and frivolous grandeur ought not to shine in your words alone.

TRIS. Nor is it that which charms me in you ; and your brilliant attractions, your piercing and soft eyes, your gracefulness and your air, are the wealth, the riches which draw my affection and my tenderness towards you : these are the only treasures of which I am enamoured.

HEN. I am much beholden to your generous flame. Such obliging love confounds me, and I regret, Sir, not to be able to respond to it. I esteem you as much as one can esteem ; but I find an obstacle to loving you. A heart, you know, cannot belong to two people ; and I feel that Clitandre has made himself master of mine. I know that he has much less merit than you, that I am no good observer when I choose him for a husband ; that by a hundred fine accomplishments, you ought to please me ; I see well enough that I am wrong, but I cannot help it ; and the only effect which reason has upon me is to make me angry with myself for being so blind.

TRIS. The gift of your hand, to which I am encouraged to pretend, shall also give me that heart which Clitandre possesses ; and I have reason to presume that by a thousand gentle cares I may find the secret of making myself beloved.

HEN. No ; my heart is attached to its first affections, and cannot be touched, Sir, by your attentions. I dare explain myself freely with you here, nor has my avowal anything to offend you. This affectionate ardour, which springs up in the heart, is not, as is well known, an effect of merit : fancy takes its share in it ; and, when some one pleases us, we often find a difficulty in saying why it is so. If we could love, Sir, by choice and prudence, you should have my whole heart, and my whole tenderness ; but we see that love is controlled otherwise. Leave me, I pray, to my blindness, and do not take advantage of this violence, which, for your sake, they wish to do to my obe-

dience. A gallant man wishes to owe nothing to the power which parents have over us. He has a repugnance to see the object of his love sacrificed, and does not wish to obtain a heart except from that heart itself. Do not drive my mother to wish, by her choice, to exercise her utmost rights upon my inclinations. Take back your love from me, and bear to some other the homage of a heart so precious as yours.

TRIS. How can this heart obey you? Impose upon it any commands which it can execute. Can it be capable of not loving you, unless you cease, Madam, to be loveable, and to display to people's eyes heavenly charms . . .

HEN. Nay, Sir, a truce to this idle nonsense. You have so many Irises, Philises, Amarantes, which throughout your verses you paint as charming, and to whom you vow so much amorous ardour. . . .

TRIS. It is my mind that speaks, and not my heart. I am enamoured of them only as a poet; but I love in all earnest the adorable Henriette.

HEN. Eh! pray, Sir. . . .

TRIS. If it offend you, my offence towards you is not likely to cease. This ardour, hitherto ignored by you, swears to be devoted to you for ever. Nothing can stay its loving transports; and, although your charms condemn my efforts, I cannot refuse the aid of a mother, who proposes to crown so dear a flame; and, provided I obtain so sweet a happiness, provided you become mine, the rest does not matter.

HEN. But do you know that you risk a little more than you imagine by using violence with a heart; that it is not very safe, to speak frankly to you, to marry a girl in spite of herself; and that she may have recourse, by seeing herself forced, to resentments which a husband ought to fear?

TRIS. Such a discourse has nothing in it to make me uneasy; a wise man is prepared for all emergencies. Cured by reason, of all vulgar weaknesses, he places himself above such things, and takes care not to feel the least annoyance at anything which does not depend upon himself.

HEN. In truth, Sir, I am delighted with you; and I

did not imagine that philosophy was so beautiful as it is, thus to teach people to bear with equanimity such accidents. This firmness of soul, so singular in you, deserves to have an illustrious subject to work upon, is worthy to find some one who lovingly takes continual pains to place it in its full light; and, as in truth, I dare not believe myself very fit to give it all the brilliancy of its glory, I leave it to some one else, and swear to you, between ourselves, that I renounce the happiness of seeing you my husband.

TRIS. (*Going*). We shall soon see how the affair will go on; for they have already got the notary within.

SCENE II.—CHRYSALE, CLITANDRE, HENRIETTE, MARTINE.

CH. Ah! daughter, I am glad to see you; come, come, and do your duty, and submit your wishes to the will of a father. I intend, I mean to teach your mother how to behave; and, the better to brave her, here is Martine whom, in spite of her, I bring back and re-instate in the house.

HEN. Your resolutions are worthy of praise. Take care not to change this disposition, father; be firm in having your wishes carried out; and do not allow them to induce you to abandon your good intentions. Do not unbend, and manage to prevent my mother from gaining a victory over you.

CH. How! Do you take me for a booby?

HEN. Heaven preserve me from it!

CH. Am I a simpleton, please?

HEN. I do not say so.

CH. Am I thought incapable of the steadfast sentiments of a reasonable man?

HEN. No, father.

CH. Should I not have the sense, at my age, to be master in my own house?

HEN. Yes, indeed.

CH. Should I be so weak in mind as to be led by the nose by my wife?

HEN. Eh! no, father.

CH. Lack-a-day! What, then, does all this mean? I think you very facetious to speak to me thus!

HEN. If I have offended you, it was not my intention.

CH. My will shall be carried out in everything in this house.

HEN. Very well, father.

CH. No one but myself, has a right to command in this house.

HEN. Yes; you are right.

CH. It is I who hold the place of head of the family.

HEN. Agreed.

CH. It is I who have to dispose of the hand of my daughter.

HEN. Eh! yes.

CH. Heaven gives me full authority over you.

HEN. Who says the contrary?

CH. And I shall soon show you that you have to obey your father, and not your mother, in taking a husband.

HEN. Alas! you flatter in this the sweetest of my inclinations; to obey you is all I wish.

CH. We shall see if my wife opposes my wishes . . .

CLIT. Here she comes bringing the notary with her.

CH. Second me well, all of you.

MAR. Leave it to me. I shall take care to encourage you if there be any need of it.

SCENE III.—PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE, ARMANDE, TRISSOTIN,
A NOTARY, CHRYSALE, CLITANDRE, HENRIETTE,
MARTINE.

PHIL. (*To the Notary*). Could you not change your barbarous style, and give us a contract in beautiful language.

NOT. Our style is very good, Madam, and I should be a fool to wish to change one word of it.

BEL. Ah! what barbarism in the very midst of France! But at least, out of regard for learning, Sir, be kind enough to enumerate the dowry in minæ and talents instead of in crowns, livres, and francs, and to date by the words of ides and calends.

NOT. I? If I were to grant your requests, Madam, I should find myself hooted by all my colleagues.

PHIL. We complain in vain against this barbarism. Come, Sir, sit down and write. (*Perceiving Martine*).

Ah! ah! this impudent girl dares to show her face here again! Why, pray, bring her back to my house?

CH. Bye-and-bye, at our leisure, we shall tell you. Now we have other matters to look after.

NOT. Let us proceed to the contract. Where is the intended bride?

PHIL. She whom I marry is the youngest daughter.

NOT. Very well.

CH. (*Pointing to Henriette*). Yes, here she is, Sir. Her name is Henriette.

NOT. Very good. And the intended bridegroom?

PHIL. (*Pointing to Trissotin*). The husband whom I give here is this gentleman.

CH. (*Pointing to Clitandre*). And the one whom I myself intend her to marry is this gentleman.

NOT. Two husbands! It is one too many, according to custom.

PHIL. (*To the Notary*). Why do you stop? Set down, set down Mr. Trissotin, for my son-in-law.

CH. For my son-in-law, set down, set down, Mr. Clitandre.

NOT. But first agree among yourselves, and after having well-weighed everything, decide between you who shall be the intended husband.

PHIL. Follow the choice, Sir, upon which I have resolved.

CH. Do things as I tell you, Sir.

NOT. Tell me which of the two I am to obey.

PHIL. (*To Chrysale*). What, you oppose my wish!

CH. I shall not allow my daughter to be courted only for the sake of my family's wealth.

PHIL. Indeed, your wealth is a great deal thought of! And a wise man takes much heed of that!

CH. In one word, I have made choice of Clitandre for her husband.

PHIL. (*Pointing to Trissotin*). And behold the one whom I design for her. My choice shall prevail; I have made up my mind to that!

CH. Upon my word! You carry things with a very high hand.

MAR. It is not for the wife to dictate, and I am for giving way in things to the men.

CH. That is well said.

MAR. Were I ever so certain of being turned out,⁴⁴ the hen ought not to crow before the cock.

CH. Undoubtedly.

MAR. And we see people jeer at a man when the wife at home wears the breeches.

CH. That is true.

MAR. I say that if I had a husband, I should like him to be master in his own house: I should not like him to play the nobody;⁴⁵ and, if I went against him through some whim or other, if I spoke too loud, I should think it very good that he lowered my tone by some slaps.

CH. That is sensibly spoken.

MAR. Master is reasonable to wish a proper husband for his daughter.

CH. Yes.

MAR. For what reason should Clitandre, young and handsome as he is, be refused to her? And why, if you please, give her a scholar, who is unceasingly making epilogues? She wants a husband, not a pedagogue; and having no wish to know either Greek or Latin, she has no need of Mr. Trissotin.

CH. Very good.

PHIL. We must allow her to chatter at her ease.

MAR. Scholars are good for nothing but to preach; and for my husband, yes, I have said it a thousand times, I would never take a man of wit. Wit is not at all wanted at the domestic hearth. Books go badly with wedlock; and I should wish, if ever my troth were plighted, a husband who had no other book but myself, who, without offence to Madam, knows not A from B, and who, in one word, should only be a doctor for his wife.

PHIL. (*To Chrysale*). Is it finished? And have I listened quietly enough to your worthy interpreter?

CH. She has spoken the truth.

⁴⁴ The original has *mon congésent fois mesût-il hoc*. *Hoc* means "assured," but its etymology is uncertain. Some say it is derived from a game of cards called *hoc*; others from *hoc*, meaning "yes" in Provençal; others, again, from *hoc*, meaning *croc*, a hook; and finally, *hoc*, with the Latin meaning of "that."

⁴⁵ The original has *s'il faisait le Jocrisse*.

PHIL. And I, to cut short this dispute, require absolutely that my plan should be carried out. (*Pointing to Trissotin*). Henriette and this gentleman shall be joined on the spot. I have said it, I will have it so; do not answer me. And if your word has been pledged to Clitandre, offer him to marry the elder.

CH. Here is a way to settle this matter. (*To Henriette and Clitandre*). Well! do you give your consent to it?

HEN. Eh! father . . .

CLI. (*To Chrysale*). Eh! Sir . . .

BEL. We might make proposals to him that should please him better; but we are for establishing a kind of love that shall be pure as the morning star: the reflecting substance may be admitted into it; but we banish the extended substance from it.

SCENE IV.— ARISTE, CHRYSALE, PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE, HENRIETTE, ARMANDE, TRISSOTIN, NOTARY, CLITANDRÉ, MARTINE.

ARI. I regret to trouble a festive ceremony by the sorrow which I am obliged to cause here. These two letters make me the bearer of two tidings, of which I have felt great grief for your sakes. (*To Philaminte*). The one for you comes to me from your solicitor. (*To Chrysale*). The other for you comes to me from Lyons.

PHIL. Who can write us about a misfortune worthy of troubling us?

ARI. This letter will relate one to you.

PHIL. "*Madam, I have requested your brother to hand you this letter, which will inform you what I dared not come to tell you. The great neglect which you show for your affairs has caused the clerk of your judge not to give me notice, and you have irrevocably lost your lawsuit, which you ought to have won.*"

CH. (*To Philaminte*). Your lawsuit lost!

PHIL. You trouble yourself much! My heart is not at all upset by this blow. Show a less common soul, and brave, like me, the strokes of fortune. "*This want of care costs you forty thousand crowns; and you have been condemned to pay this sum with costs, by an order of the Court.*" Con-

demned? Ah! this word is offensive, and is made for criminals only!

ARIS. He is wrong, in fact; and you right in finding fault with him. He ought to have said that you are invited, by order of the Court, to pay as quickly as possible forty thousand crowns and the necessary expenses.

PHIL. Let us see the other.

CH. "*Sir, the friendship which binds me to your brother makes me take an interest in all that concerns you. I know that you have placed all your property in the hands of Argante and Damon, and I beg to give you notice that they have both become bankrupts on the same day. O Heavens! at once to lose all that I possess!*"

PHIL. (*To Chrysale*). Ah! What a shameful outbreak! Fie! all this is nothing. To the real philosopher there is no serious reverse, and, losing everything, he still remains all in all to himself. Let us terminate our affair, and have done with your grief. (*Pointing to Trissotin*). His wealth will suffice for us all.

TRIS. No, Madam: cease to press this matter. I see that every one is opposed to this marriage, and I have no desire to force people's inclinations.

PHIL. This consideration has come upon you very quickly; it follows very closely, Sir, upon our misfortune.

TRIS. I am weary at last of so much resistance. I prefer renouncing all this bickering, and do not wish for a heart which does not give itself freely.

PHIL. I see, I see now, and not at all to your credit, what hitherto I have refused to believe of you.

TRIS. You may believe of me what you please, and I care little how you take it: but I am not the man to suffer the shame of the offensive refusals which I have undergone here. I am well worth being made much more of and my service to those who will not have me.

SCENE V.—ARISTE, CHRYSALE, PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE, ARMANDE, HENRIETTE, CLITANDRE, NOTARY, MARTINE.

PHIL. How clearly he has shown his mercenary soul!

and how little there is of the philosopher in what he has just done!

CLI. I do not boast of being such; but in one word, I do not separate my fate from yours, Madam; and I dare offer you with my person the little which fortune has bestowed upon me.

PHIL. You charm me, Sir, by this generous trait, and I will crown the desires of your affection. Yes; I grant Henriette to the eager ardour . . .

HEN. No, mother; I now change my mind. Permit me to resist your wishes.

CLIT. What! you oppose my happiness! and, when I see every one yield to my love . . .

HEN. I know the smallness of your fortune, Clitandre; and I have ever desired you for my husband, when by satisfying my sweetest inclinations I saw that my union improved your affairs. But when we have such contrary fates, I love you sufficiently in such extremity, not to burden you with our adversity.

CLIT. Every destiny shared with you would be pleasant; every destiny without you would be unbearable.

HEN. Love, in its transport, speaks always thus. Let us avoid painful and unpleasant reflections. Nothing wears so quickly the affections of the tie which binds us as the sad necessities of life's cares; and people often, upon such occasions, accuse each other mutually of all the dismal griefs which proceed from such engagements.

ARI. (*To Henriette*). Is this the only motive which makes you refuse the union with Clintandre?

HEN. Without this, you would find my heart leap at it; I refuse his hand only because I love him too well.

ARI. Then be bound by such beautiful chains. I have brought you only false tidings; and it is a trick, a surprising device, which I have put into practice to serve your love, to undeceive my sister, and show her what her philosopher would prove upon trial.

CH. Heaven be praised for it!

PHIL. I am glad at the vexation which it will give this base deserter. To see this match concluded with magnificence will be a punishment to his sordid meanness.

CH. (*To Clitandre*). I knew well enough that you would marry her.

AR. (*To Philaminte*). Then you sacrifice me to their love?

PHIL. It is not you whom I sacrifice to them ; and you have the support of philosophy to see with a satisfied eye their ardour crowned.

BEL. Let him beware, at least, that I am not dwelling in his heart. One marries often through sudden despair, and repents all one's life afterwards.

CH. (*To the Notary*). Come, Sir, follow the order which I have prescribed, and draw up the contract as I have told you.

LE MALADE IMAGINAIRE.

COMÉDIE.

THE IMAGINARY INVALID.

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS.

INTERSPERSED WITH MUSIC AND DANCING.

(THE ORIGINAL IN PROSE.)

FEBRUARY 10TH, 1673.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE

WHILST Molière was very ill and nearly dying, when he felt every day his strength failing him, and his life passing away rapidly, he wrote a comedy, *The Imaginary Invalid*, in which he depicts the folly of a man who, though in good health, believes himself ill, blindly obeys his doctor, and swallows and takes what he prescribes for him; in other words, the very counterpart of Molière himself. This comedy was first performed at the theatre of the Palais Royal, on the 10th of February, 1673. During the fourth representation, Molière became ill and died on the same evening, the 17th of February. The theatre did not open until the 24th of that month, with *The Misanthrope*, and with Baron in the part of Alceste. *The Imaginary Invalid* was performed again, with La Thorillière in the character of Argan, and was acted nine times. On the 4th of May 1674, it was acted anew, and had thirty-seven consecutive representations, whilst it was played before the court on the 19th of July of the same year. On the 19th of November it was brought out again, and played eleven times; so that it was represented in all sixty-two times—a proof that the public was not tired in admiring the last work of France's great dramatist.

In the character of Argan Molière endeavoured to sketch the excessive dread of death and its consequences, harshness of heart, tyrannical egotism, and an extreme facility for being deceived. Argan's wife, Béline, tyrannizes over him, Mr. Purgon and Mr. Fleurant rule him with a rod of iron, whilst Béralde, Argan's brother, is a sceptic in medicine, and probably is only the mouth-piece of the very arguments of Molière himself. The burlesque reception of Argan as a doctor, in the last interlude, is very similar to the real reception of a doctor, and it seems that some of Molière's medical friends assisted him in this description. John Locke, who passed three years after Molière's death through Montpellier, was present at the examination of a physician, and the conferring of his degree, and describes a procession of the doctors dressed in red, with black caps on their heads, and followed by ten violin-players, the speech of the president against the circulation of the blood, the different compliments of the newly made doctor, and his putting on a cap, a ring on his finger, and a golden chain round his loins. In Paris there was no music when a doctor's degree was conferred.

Molière had flattered himself that *The Imaginary Invalid* should be

represented at court during the carnival of 1673, and the Prologue is sufficient evidence of this. But Louis XIV., who, during the preceding summer, had made his first campaign in Holland, had probably his mind filled with more or less heroic thoughts, and ordered the *Mithridates* of Racine, to be performed by the comedians of the hotel de Bourgogne; Lulli also made some opposition with regard to the music, which was forbidden to be played on any other stage than the Opera.

Dr. Martin Lister, an Englishman who was in Paris in 1698, says :—¹

"It is said Molière died suddenly in acting the *Malade Imaginaire*; which is a good instance of his well personating the play he made, and how he could really put himself into any passion he had in his head. . . . He is reported to have said, going off the stage, '*Messieurs, J'ai joué le Malade Imaginaire, mais je suis véritablement fort malade*;' and he died two hours after. This account of Molière is not in his life by Perrault; but it is true; and yet he has blamed him for his folly, in persecuting the art of physic, not the men, in divers of his plays.

"Molière sent for Dr. M——, a physician of Paris of great esteem and worth, and now in London a refugee. Dr. M—— sent him word he would come to him, upon two conditions; the one, that he should answer him only to such questions as he should ask him, and not otherwise discourse him; the other, that he should oblige himself to take the medicines that he should prescribe for him. But Molière finding the doctor too hard for him, and not easily to be duped, refused them. His business, it seems, was to make a comical scene in exposing one of the most learned men of the profession, as he had done the quacks. If this was his intention, as in all probability it was, Molière had as much malice as wit; which is only to be used to correct the viciousness and folly of men pretending to knowledge, and not the arts themselves."

The words which Dr. Lister attributes to Molière as having been uttered by him on the stage, have never had any corroborative evidence. Who the Dr. M. may be, whom the learned English physician mentions, and who appears to have told him a cock-and-bull story, it is now impossible to find out; but the animus of Dr. Lister, and his spite against Molière, twenty-five years after the dramatist's death, is distinctly shown in the extract given above.

As the king had early in the year 1674 forbidden *The Imaginary Invalid* to become public property, until it was printed, and as the troupe of Molière did not hasten to publish it, several spurious editions soon saw the light. The first published at Amsterdam by D. Elzevir, in 1674, and probably written by some one who had seen the play in Paris, and wrote it down from memory, is absolutely valueless, except as indicating some stage play, and describing the dresses. A second surreptitious edition was published the same year, at Cologne, by J. Sambin, and appears to be so well done that it seems possible that the original manuscript has been consulted. But the comedy, as we now know it, was first published in the collected edition of Molière's works of La Grange and Vinot, in 1682. They were both friends of Molière, the first even a fellow-actor, and had consulted the manuscripts lent to them by his widow. The book of the ballet and the words of the physician's admission, that is the last interlude, had been separately published several times before.

In the eighth volume of "Select Comedies of M. de Molière," London, 1732, this play is translated under the name of the *Hypochondriack*, and dedicated to his Grace the Duke of Argyle, in the following words :—

¹ *A Journey to Paris in the year 1698.*

MY LORD,—By prefixing Your Grace's Name to this Performance I have quite ruined my Dedication, for both my Author's Character as a Writer, and your Grace's for fine Sense, Humanity, and Politeness, are so thoroughly known and so strongly established in the World, that it would be Impertinence and Presumption to say anything of either, Thus deprived of the two great Sources of an Epistle dedicatory, what can I do? why agreeable to the common Practice of my cotemporary Brethren I should have recourse to my own Abilities and the Merit of my Translation: But those, your Grace, I fear, will be too readily acquainted with, if You should give Yourself the trouble to cast an Eye upon what I have done; I shall therefore say one Word only in behalf of the Bookseller, and then give your Grace no further Trouble. This Volume completes the Select Collection of Molière's Comedies in French and English, to the success of which your Grace's Favour and Protection are absolutely necessary, and most humbly intreated. As the Intention of this Work is to introduce pure Nature and true Wit once more in our Diversions, and to chase Folly and Vice from our Conversations and Practice; a more proper Patron could not possibly be found to recommend it to the World, than one of your Grace's Taste and Virtues.—I am, my Lord, Your Grace's most obedient and most humble servant,

THE TRANSLATOR.

Several English dramatists have borrowed from Molière. Mrs. Aphra Behn has, in *Sir Patient Fancy*, acted at the theatre Dorset Garden, in 1678 (see Introductory Notice to *Love is the best Doctor*, Vol. II.,) partly imitated Argan in *Sir Patient Fancy*. A great portion of the fifth act is also taken from Molière; but the whole is wilfully indecent.

J. Miller's *Mother-in-Law, or the Doctor the Disease* (see Introductory Notice to *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*, Vol. III., page 85), which was brought out at the Haymarket Theatre on the 12th of February 1734, is based chiefly on Molière's play *The Imaginary Invalid*.

Isaac Bickerstaffe wrote *Dr. Last in his Chariot*, a comedy performed at the Haymarket Theatre, on the 25th of August 1769 (see Introductory Notice to *Love is the best Doctor*, Vol. II, page 137), of which the bulk is taken from *The Imaginary Invalid*. Argan is called Ailwou'd; Béralde, Friendly; Cléante, Hargrave; Béline, Mrs. Ailwou'd; Angélique, Nancy; Louison, Polly; and Toinette is changed into a man-servant, called Wag.

PROLOGUE.

After the glorious fatigues and the victorious exploits of our august monarch, it is quite right that those who write should labour either to praise or to amuse him. That is what we have wished to do here ; and this prologue is an attempt to praise this grand prince, which serves to introduce the comedy of *The Imaginary Invalid*, of which the purpose was to give him relief from his noble works.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

IN THE COMEDY.

ARGAN, <i>an imaginary invalid</i> . ²	MR. FLEURANT, <i>an apothecary</i> . ⁶
BERALDE, <i>his brother</i> . ³	MR. DE BONNEFOI, <i>a notary</i> .
CLEANTE, <i>Angelique's lover</i> . ⁴	BELINE, <i>Argan's second wife</i> .
MR. PURGON, <i>Argan's physician</i> .	ANGELIQUE, <i>Argan's daughter</i> .
MR. DIAFOIRUS, <i>a physician</i> .	LOUISON (<i>a little girl</i>), <i>Argan's daughter</i> .
THOMAS DIAFOIRUS, <i>his son, betrothed to Angelique</i> . ⁵	TOINETTE, <i>a servant</i> .

IN THE PROLOGUE.

FLORA. TWO DANCING ZEPHYRS. CLIMENE. DAPHNE.
 TIRCIS, *Climene's lover, chief of a troop of shepherds*.
 DORILAS, *Daphne's lover, chief of a troop of shepherds*.
 SHEPHERDS and SHEPHERDESSES *of the suite of Tircis*.
 SHEPHERDS and SHEPHERDESSES *of the suite of Dorilas*.
 PAN.
 FAUNS (*dancing*).

IN THE INTERLUDES.

First Act.

PUNCH. AN OLD WOMAN. VIOLIN-PLAYERS.
 ARCHERS (*dancing and singing*).

Second Act.

FOUR SINGING GIPSIES. OTHER SINGING AND DANCING GIPSIES.

Third Act.

SINGING UPHOLSTERERS.	BACHELOR.
THE PRESIDENT OF THE MEDICAL FACULTY.	APOTHECARIES (<i>with their mortars and pestles</i>).
PHYSICIANS.	SURGEONS.
ARGAN.	SYRINGE-BEARERS.

Scene.—PARIS.

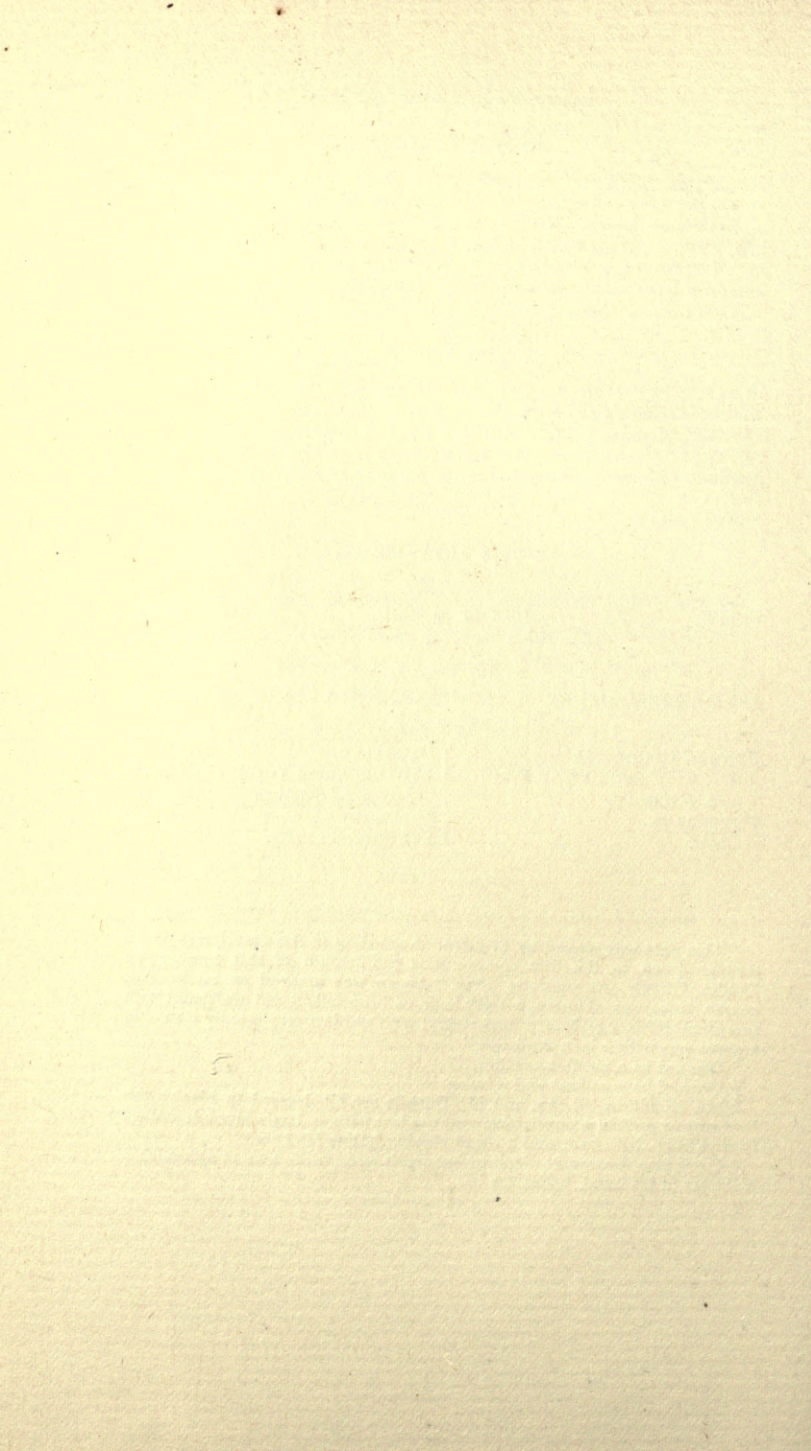
² This part was played by Molière. According to the description of the dresses given in the first surreptitious publication of this comedy, by Daniel Elzevir, Amsterdam, 1674, "Argan was arrayed as an invalid, coarse stockings, slippers, a tight pair of breeches, a red waistcoat with some embroidery or lace, a neckerchief with old lace negligently fastened, a night-cap with a lace skull-cap."

³ Dressed as a modest cavalier.

⁴ Dressed as a gallant and a lover.

⁵ Mr. Diafoirus, his son, and Mr. Purgon are all dressed in black; the first two as ordinary physicians, and the last with a large smooth collar, having long sleek hair, and a cloak coming below his knees.

⁶ He is also dressed in black or brownish grey, with a short apron, and a clyster in his hand, without a hat.



THE IMAGINARY INVALID.

(*LE MALADE IMAGINAIRE*).

ECLOGUE WITH MUSIC AND DANCING.

The Scene represents a rustic, pleasant spot.

Scene I.—Flora, Two Zephyrs, dancing.

FLO. Leave, leave your flocks ;
 Come shepherds, shepherdesses all ;
 Assemble 'neath these youthful elms :
 I have come to announce to you sweet tidings,
 Wherewith these hamlets to rejoice.
 Leave, leave your flocks ;
 Come shepherds, shepherdesses all ;
 Assemble 'neath these youthful elms.

*Scene II.—Flora, Two Zephyrs dancing ; Climène,
 Daphné, Tircis, Dorilas.*

CLI. (*To Tircis*). DAPH. (*To Dorilas*).
 Leave your protestations, shepherd :
 It is Flora who now calls.

TIR. (*To Climène*). DOR. (*To Daphné*).
 But cruel one, tell me at least,
 If by a little friendship, you will repay my vows.

TIR. If you will be sensible of my faithful ardour.

CLI. AND DAPH. It is Flora who now calls.

TIR. AND DOR. It is but a word, a word, a word only that I crave.

TIR. Shall I for ever languish in my mortal pain ?

DOR. May I hope that one day you shall make me happy ?

CLI. AND DAPH. It is Flora who now calls.

Scene III. — Flora, Two Zephyrs dancing; Climène, Daphné, Tircis, Dorilas, Shepherds and Shepherdesses, of the suite of Tircis and Dorilas, dancing and singing.

First Entry of the Ballet.

All the Shepherds and Shepherdesses place themselves around Flora, keeping time to the music.

CLI. What news is that, O goddess,
That amongst us is to diffuse so much joy ?

DAPH. We burn to learn from you,
These important tidings.

DOR. Eagerly we all sigh for it.

CLI., DAPH., TIR., DOR.
With impatience we die for it.

FLO. Here it is ; silence, silence,
Your prayers have been granted, Louis is
returned ;
In these spots he brings back pleasures and
love,
And you behold an end to your mortal alarms.
By his vast exploits, he sees everything sub-
jected :

He lays down his arms,
Failing foes.

CHORUS. Ah ! what sweet news !
How grand it is, how beautiful it is !
What pleasure ! what laughter ! what sports !
what happy successes !
And how well Heaven has fulfilled our wishes !
Ah ! what sweet news !
How grand it is ! how beautiful it is !

Second Entry of the Ballet.

*All the Shepherds and Shepherdesses express by their dances,
the transports of their joy.*

- FLO. From your rural pipes
Evoke the sweetest sounds ;
Louis offers to your songs
The most beautiful subject.
After a hundred battles,
In which his arm
Reaps an ample victory,
Form amongst you
A hundred battles still more sweet,
To sing his glory.
- CHORUS. Let us form amongst us
A hundred battles still more sweet,
To sing his glory.
- FLO. My youthful lover, in these woods,
From my empire prepares a present,
As a prize for the voice
Who shall best succeed in telling us
The virtue and the exploits
Of the most august of kings.

CLI. If Tircis has the advantage.

DAPH. If Dorilas conqueror be.

CLI. To cherish him I promise.

DAPH. To his ardour I will give myself.

TIR. Oh hope too dear !

DOR. Oh word replete with sweetness !

TIR. AND DOR. Could grander subject, sweeter reward
animate a heart ?

The violins play an air to animate the two shepherds to the competition, while Flora, as umpire, places herself, with two Zephyrs, at the foot of a beautiful tree in the middle of the stage, and the rest occupy the two sides, as spectators.

- TIR. When the melted snow swells a famous torrent,
Against the sudden effort of its frothy waves
There is nothing sufficiently solid ;
Dykes, castles, towns, and woods,

Men and flocks at one and the same time,
All things bend to the current which guides it :
Such, and fiercer, and more rapid still
Louis marches in his exploits.

Third Entry of the Ballet.

*The Shepherds and Shepherdesses at Tircis' side dance
round him, to the measure of a ritornello, to express
their applause.*

DOR. The threatening lightning that with fury pierces
The horrible darkness, by a fiery glow,
Causes, with fear and terror,
The most steadfast heart to tremble ;
But, at the head of an army,
Louis inspires more terror still.

Fourth Entry of the Ballet.

*The Shepherds and Shepherdesses at Dorilas' side do the
same thing as the others have done.*

TIR. We see the fabulous exploits which Greece has
sung,
Effaced by many grander truths ;
And all these famous demi-gods
Whom past history vaunts,
Are not even to our thoughts
What Louis is in our eyes.

Fifth Entry of the Ballet.

*The Shepherds and Shepherdesses once more do the same
thing that the others have done.*

DOR. In our days, Louis, by his astonishing feats,
Makes us believe the grand deeds which history
has sung
Of by-gone ages ;
But our nephews, in their glory,
Shall have nothing that can make believe
All the grand feats of Louis.

Sixth Entry of the Ballet.

*The Shepherds and Shepherdesses at Dorilas' side again do
the same things.*

Seventh Entry of the Ballet.

The Shepherds and Shepherdesses on both sides mingle and dance together.

Scene VI.—Flora, Pan; Two Zephyrs dancing; Climène, Daphné, Tircis, Dorilas, Fauns dancing, Shepherds and Shepherdesses dancing and singing.

- PAN. Abandon, abandon, shepherds, this bold design,
 Eh ! what would you do ?
 Sing on your pipes
 What Apollo, on his lyre,
 With his most lovely songs,
 Would not undertake to say ?
 It is giving too much flight to the fire that inspires
 you,
 It is mounting towards the sky on waxen wings,
 To drop down to the bottom of the deep,
 To sing the intrepid courage of Louis,
 There is no voice that is learned enough,
 There are no words grand enough to describe it ;
 Silence is the language
 That must laud his exploits.
 Consecrate other cares to his signal victory ;
 Your praises have naught that flatters his desires :
 Leave, leave his glory ;
 Think of nothing but his pleasures.
- CHOR. Leave, leave his glory ;
 Think of nothing but his pleasures.
- FLO. (*To Tircis and to Dorilas*).
 Although, to laud his immortal virtues,
 Strength may fail your minds,
 Both may receive the prize.
 In grand and beauteous things
 It is sufficient to have tried.

Eighth Entry of the Ballet.

The two Zephyrs dance with two chaplets of flowers in their hands, which they afterwards give to the two Shepherds.

- CLI. AND DAPH. (*Giving their lovers their hands*).
 In grand and beauteous things,
 It is sufficient to have tried.

TIR. AND DOR. Ah ! with what sweet rewards our boldness has been crowned !

FLO. AND PAN. What one does for Louis is never lost.
CLI., DAPH., TIR., DOR.

Let us give ourselves henceforth to the care for his pleasures.

FLO. AND PAN. Happy, happy, who can devote his life to him !

CHORUS. In these woods let us mingle
Our flutes and our voices ;
This day invites us to it.
And let us make the echoes resound a thousand times,
Louis is the greatest of kings,
Happy, happy who can devote his life to him !

Ninth Entry of the Ballet.

Fauns, Shepherds, and Shepherdesses all mingle together to execute a dance ; after which they go to prepare themselves for the Comedy.

ANOTHER PROLOGUE.[†]

SCENE I.—*A Shepherdess singing.*

Your highest knowledge is but pure chimera,
Vain and not very learned doctors ;
You cannot cure, by your grand Latin words,
The grief that causes my despair.
Your highest knowledge is but pure chimera.

[†] This second prologue is not in the libretto of the ballet. It was probably often used, both for shortness' sake, and because it announces the subject of the Comedy, and is to be found in the Amsterdam edition. It is preceded by the following description :—

The theatre represents a forest. When the stage is seen, an agreeable noise of instruments is heard. Afterwards, a Shepherdess comes to complain tenderly that she finds no remedy for the pangs which she suffers. Several Fauns and Ægyptians, assembled for their peculiar festival and games, meet the Shepherdess. They listen to her complaints, and form a very amusing spectacle. Complaint of the Shepherdess :—

Alas ! alas ! I dare not reveal
My love-sick martyrdom
To the shepherd for whom I sigh,
And who alone can relieve me.
Do not pretend to put an end to it,
Ignorant doctors, you would not know how to do it :
Your highest knowledge is but pure chimera.

These uncertain remedies, of which the simple people
Think that you know the admirable virtue,
Cannot cure the ills I feel :
And all your gibberish can be received
Only by an *Imaginary Invalid*.
Your highest knowledge is but pure chimera,
Vain and little informed doctors, etc.

The Scene changes, and represents an apartment.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—ARGAN, seated before a table, is adding up his apothecary's bill with counters.

AR. Three and two make five, and five make ten, and ten make twenty ; three and two make five. “ Besides, on the twenty-fourth,⁸ a small clyster, mild, preparative and soothing, to soothe, moisten, and refresh Mr. Argan's inward parts.” What pleases me in Mr. Fleurant, my apothecary, is that his bills are always so civil. “ Mr. Argan's inward parts, thirty sols.” Yes ; but, Mr. Fleurant, to be civil is not everything ; you should also be moderate, and not flay your patients. Thirty sols an enema ! I am your humble servant, I have already told you ; in your other bills you have put them at only twenty sols ; and twenty sols in apothecary's language means ten sols ; here they are, ten sols. “ Besides, on the said date, a good cleaning clyster, composed of double catholicon, rhubarb, with honey of roses, and other ingredients,

⁸ As Argan's verification of medicine delivered during the entire month would be too long, the curtain rises when he is at the twenty-fourth day.

according to prescription, to scour, wash and clean the lower abdomen of Mr. Argan, thirty sols." By your leave, ten sols. "Besides, on the said date, in the evening, a julep for the liver, soporative and soporific, composed to make Mr. Argan sleep, thirty-five sols." I do not complain of this, for it made me sleep very well. Ten, fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen sols, six deniers.⁹ "Besides, on the twenty-fifth, a good purgative and strengthening draught, composed of fresh cassia, with Levantine senna, and other ingredients, according to the prescription of Mr. Purgon, to expel and evacuate Mr. Argan's bile, four francs." Ah! Mr. Fleurant, this is too much of a joke: one should give and take with patients. Mr. Purgon did not order you to put down four francs. Put down, put down three francs, if you please. Twenty and thirty sols.¹⁰ "Besides, on the same date, an anodyne and astringent potion, to procure Mr. Argan some rest, thirty sols." Good, ten and fifteen sols.¹¹ "Besides, on the twenty-sixth, a carminative clyster, to drive away Mr. Argan's flatulence, thirty sols." Ten sols, Mr. Fleurant. "Besides the same clyster, repeated in the evening, as above, thirty sols." Mr. Fleurant, ten sols. "Besides, on the twenty-seventh, a good draught to hasten and drive out the bad humours of Mr. Argan, three livres." Good, twenty and thirty sols; I am glad that you are reasonable. "Besides, on the twenty-eighth, a small dose of clarified and edulcorated milk, to soften, temper, refresh, and purify Mr. Argan's blood, twenty sols." Good, ten sols.¹² Besides, a cordial and preservative potion, composed of twelve grains of bezoar, syrup of lemon and pomegranates, and other ingredients, according to prescription, five livres." Ah! Mr. Fleurant, gently if you please, if you go on thus, one would no longer care to be ill: be satisfied with four francs; twenty and forty sols. Three and two make

⁹ Argan always puts down half of what the apothecary asks. Although the julep has done him good, he puts down only seventeen sous, six deniers,—half of Mr. Fleurant's charge, which was thirty-five sous.

¹⁰ Here Argan puts down again the half of the three francs, the apothecary's charge, and says "thirty sols." He first marks with his counters twenty sols, and then adds ten more, which make thirty, but never thought of putting down fifty.

¹¹ See note above.

¹² See note above.



Horace Vernet p^t

Nargoot sc^t.

THE IMAGINARY INVALID.

Act I. sc. I.

five, and five make ten, and ten make twenty. Sixty-three livres, four sols, and six deniers. So that, this month, I have taken, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven and eight remedies; and one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven and twelve enemas; and the other month, there were twelve remedies and twenty enemas. I am not surprised that I am not so well this month as the other. I had better tell this to Mr. Purgon, so that he may set this matter to rights. Come, take all this away. (*Seeing that no one comes, that there are none of his servants in the room*). There is no one here. I may say what I like, I am always left alone: there is no means of making them stay here. (*After having rung a bell that is on the table*). They do not hear, and my bell does not make sufficient noise. Tingle, tingle, tingle.¹³ Not a bit of use. Tingle, tingle, tingle! They are deaf. . . . Toinette! Tingle, tingle, tingle. Just as if I did not ring at all. You wretch! you slut! Tingle, tingle, tingle.¹⁴ I am in a rage! Tingle, tingle, tingle! To the devil with you, baggage! Is it possible that they can leave a poor invalid by himself in this way? Tingle, tingle, tingle. This is most wretched. Tingle, tingle, tingle! Ah! good Heavens! they will leave me to die here! tingle, tingle, tingle.

SCENE II.—ARGAN, TOINETTE.

TOI. (*Entering*). Coming, coming.

ARG. Ah! slut! ah! baggage. . . .

TOI. (*Pretends to have knocked her head*). The deuce take your impatience! You hurry people so, that I have given myself a great knock on the head against the outside corner of the shutter.

ARG. (*Angry*). Ah! you wretch! . . .

TOI. (*Interrupting him*). Ah!

ARG. It is an . . .

TOI. Ah! . . .

ARG. It is an hour . . .

¹³ In the original, *Drelin*, a word invented to imitate the sound of a bell when rung.

¹⁴ Argan no longer rings his bell, but shouts.

TOI. Ah!

ARG. That you have left me . . .

TOI. Ah!

ARG. Hold your tongue, you slut, that I may scold you.

TOI. Upon my word, I like that. I should advise you to do so, after what I have just done to myself.

ARG. You have given me a sore throat, you slut.

TOI. And you have given me a broken head: one is as good as the other. We are quits, if you like.

ARG. What! you baggage . . .

TOI. If you scold, I shall cry.

ARG. To leave me, you wretch . . .

TOI. (*Once more interrupting Argan*). Ah!

ARG. You slut! . . . you wish me to . . .

TOI. Ah!

ARG. What! I am not to have the pleasure of scolding her!

TOI. Scold as much as you like: I am agreeable.

ARG. You prevent me, you slut, by interrupting me at every point.

TOI. If you have the pleasure of scolding, I may, on my side, have the pleasure of crying: each his own; that is not too much. Ah!

ARG. Come, I shall have to do without it. Take this away, you wretch, take this away. (*After having risen*). Has my enema of to-day acted well?

TOI. Your enema?

ARG. Yes. Had I much bile?

TOI. Upon my word, I do not meddle with these things, it is for Mr. Fleurant to put his nose into them, since he profits by them.

ARG. Let them take care to keep some beef-tea ready for me, for the other which I am to take by-and-bye.

TOI. This Mr. Fleurant, and this Mr. Purgon amuse themselves very much with your body; they have a good milch-cow in you; and I should much like to ask them what disease you have, to want so many remedies.

ARG. Hold your tongue, you ignorant woman; it is not for you to control the prescriptions of the faculty. Send my daughter Angélique to me: I have something to say to her.

TOI. Here she comes of her own accord ; she has guessed your thought.

SCENE III.—ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, TOINETTE.

ARG. Come here, Angélique : you come opportunely ; I wished to speak to you.

AN. Behold me ready to listen to you.

ARG. Wait. (*To Toinette*). Give me my stick. I shall be back in a moment.

TOI. Go quickly, Sir, go. Mr. Fleurant gives us some work.

SCENE IV.—ANGÉLIQUE, TOINETTE.

AN. Toinette !

TOI. What !

AN. Just look at me.

TOI. Well ! I am looking at you.

AN. Toinette !

TOI. Well ! what, Toinette ?

AN. Cannot you guess what I wish to speak about ?

TOI. I have my doubts about it : of our young lover ; for it is on him that for six days all our conversations turn ; and you are not at your ease, unless you talk of him at every moment.

AN. Since you know that, why are you not the first to converse with me about it ? And why do you not save me the trouble of dragging you into this conversation ?

TOI. You do not give me time to do so ; and you are so anxious about it, that it becomes difficult to forestall you.

AN. I confess to you that I cannot tire of speaking of him to you, and that my heart warmly takes advantage of every moment to open itself to you. But tell me, Toinette, do you condemn the sentiments which I have for him ?

TOI. I have no such thoughts.

AN. Am I wrong in abandoning myself to these sweet impressions ?

TOI. I do not say so.

AN. And would you have me be insensible to the tender protestations of this ardent passion which he shows for me ?

TOI. Heaven forbid!

AN. Just tell me; do not you see, with me, something from Heaven, some working of destiny, in the unexpected adventure of our acquaintance?

TOI. Yes.

AN. Do not you find that this action of taking up my defence, without knowing me, is altogether that of a gentleman?

TOI. Yes.

AN. That one could not have behaved more generously?

TOI. Agreed.

AN. And that he did all this with the best possible grace?

TOI. Oh! yes.

AN. Do not you think, Toinette, that he is well made in person?

TOI. Assuredly.

AN. That he has the finest appearance in the world?

TOI. No doubt.

AN. That his conversations, like his actions, have something noble?

TOI. That is certain.

AN. That there could be nothing more passionate than what he says to me?

TOI. It is true.

AN. And that there is nothing more annoying than the restraint under which I am kept, which stops all interchange of the sweet eagerness of this mutual affection with which Heaven inspires us?

TOI. You are right.

AN. But, my dear Toinette, think you that he loves me as well as he says to me?

TOI. Eh! eh! these things are sometimes a little to be doubted. The vain pretences of love are very like the truth; and I have seen some great actors on that subject.

AN. Ah! Toinette, what are you saying there? Alas! from the way he speaks, could it well be possible that he does not tell me the truth?

TOI. At any rate, you will be soon enlightened; and the resolve, of which he wrote to you yesterday, that he

had taken to ask for your hand, is a prompt way to show you whether he loves you or not.¹⁵ That will be the right proof.

AN. Ah! 'Toinette, if this one deceives me, I shall never in my life believe another man.

TOI. Here is your father coming back.

SCENE V.—ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, TOINETTE.

ARG. Daughter, I am going to tell you some news which, perhaps, you did not expect. You are being asked in marriage. What is this? You laugh? That is pleasant, yes, this word marriage! There is nothing more funny to young girls. Ah! nature, nature! From what I can perceive, daughter, I need hardly ask you, whether you would like to get married.

AN. I must do all, father, that it pleases you to order me.

ARG. I am glad to have so obedient a daughter: so the matter is settled, and I have promised your hand.

AN. It is for me, father, blindly to follow all your wishes.

ARG. My wife, your step-mother, wished me to make you a nun, as well as your little sister Louison; and she has always persisted in it.

TOI. (*Aside*). The innocent has her reasons.

ARG. She would not consent to this marriage; but I have carried the day, and I have given my word.

AN. Ah! father, how obliged I am to you for all your goodness!

TOI. (*To Argan*). Truly, I like you for this; and this is the most sensible thing you ever did in all your life.

ARG. I have not yet seen the gentleman; but I have been told that I should be satisfied with him, and you also.

AN. Assuredly, father.

ARG. How! have you seen him?

AN. Since your consent authorizes me to open my heart to you, I will not dissemble, but tell you that accident

¹⁵ Toinette prepares us for the mistake of the next scene, by informing us that Cléante had asked for the hand of Angélique. In the third act we shall see, however, that he had asked Béralde to do so.

made us acquainted six days ago, and that the request which has been made to you is the result of the inclination, which we, at this first sight, have conceived for each other.

ARG. They did not tell me this: but I am very glad of it, and it is much better that matters are so. They tell me that he is a tall young man, well made.

AN. Yes, father.

ARG. Of good stature.

AN. No doubt.

ARG. Agreeable in person.

AN. Assuredly.

ARG. Good-looking.

AN. Very much so.

ARG. Steady and well born.

AN. Quite.

ARG. Well bred.

AN. Could not possibly be better.

ARG. Who speaks Latin and Greek well.

AN. That is what I do not know.

ARG. And that he will take his diploma as a physician in three days.

AN. He, father?

ARG. Yes. Has he not told you?

AN. No indeed. Who told you?

ARG. Mr. Purgon.

AN. Does Mr. Purgon know him?

ARG. A pretty question! He should know him, seeing that he is his nephew.

AN. Cléante, the nephew of Mr. Purgon?

ARG. Which Cléante? We are speaking of the one who has asked you in marriage.

AN. Well! yes.

ARG. Well! he is the nephew of Mr. Purgon, the son of his brother-in-law Dr. Diafoirus; and this son's name is Thomas Diafoirus, and not Cléante; and we have settled this match this morning, Mr. Purgon, Mr. Fleurant, and I; and to-morrow this intended son-in-law is to be brought to me by his father. What is the matter? You look altogether amazed!

AN. It is father, because I find that you have been speaking of one person, and that I understood another.

TOI. What ! Sir, you could have formed that ridiculous design ? And, with all the wealth you have, you would marry your daughter to a physician ?

ARG. Yes. What are you interfering with, you slut, impudent hussy that you are ?

TOI. Good gracious ! gently. You begin immediately with invectives. Can we not argue together without getting into a passion ? There, let us speak in cool blood. What is your reason, if you please, for such a match ?

ARG. My reason is that, seeing myself infirm and ill as I am, I wish to have a son-in-law and relations who are physicians, so as to have the support of good assistance against my illness, to have in my own family the sources of the remedies which are necessary to me, and to be in a position of having consultations and prescriptions.

TOI. Well ! that is giving your reason, and it is a pleasure to answer each other gently. But, Sir, consult your own conscience. Are you ill ?

ARG. How ! you wretch ! am I ill ! Am I ill, impudent hussey !

TOI. Well ! yes, Sir ; you are ill, let us not quarrel about that. Yes, you are very ill, I am agreed, and more ill than you imagine ; that is settled. But your daughter must marry a husband for herself ; and, not being ill, it is not necessary to give her a doctor.

ARG. It is for me that I give her this doctor ; and a well disposed daughter ought to be delighted to marry that which is useful to the health of her father.

TOI. Upon my word, Sir, shall I as a friend give you an advice ?

ARG. What is it, this advice ?

TOI. Not to think of this marriage.

ARG. And the reason ?

TOI. The reason is, that your daughter will not consent to it.

ARG. She will not consent to it ?

TOI. No.

ARG. My daughter ?

TOI. Your daughter. She will tell you that she has nothing to do with Mr. Diafoirus, nor with his son

Thomas Diafoirus, nor with any of the Diafoiruses in the world.

ARG. I have to do with them, besides that the match is more advantageous than the world imagines. Mr. Diafoirus has no other heir than this son ; and, what is more, Mr. Purgon, who has neither wife nor child, leaves him all his property in consideration of this marriage, and Mr. Purgon is a man who has eight thousand livres a-year.

TOI. He must have killed a good many people, to have made himself so rich !

ARG. Eight thousand livres a-year are something, without reckoning the father's property.

TOI. All that is well and good, Sir ; but I am always coming back to this : I advise you, between ourselves, to choose her another husband ; and she is not made to be Mrs. Diafoirus.

ARG. And I wish it to be so.

TOI. Eh, fie ! do not say so.

ARG. How ! do not say so.

TOI. Eh, no.

ARG. And why should I not say so ?

TOI. One would say you are not thinking of what you are saying.

ARG. One may say what one likes ; but I tell you that it is my wish that she shall fulfil my given promise.

TOI. No ; I am sure that she will not do so.

ARG. I will force her to do so.

TOI. She will not do so, I tell you.

ARG. She shall do so, or I shall put her in a convent.

TOI. You ?

ARG. I.

TOI. Good !

ARG. How ! good ?

TOI. You will not put her in a convent.

ARG. I will not put her in a convent ?

TOI. No.

ARG. No ?

TOI. No.

ARG. Hoity toity ! This is pleasant ! I shall not put my daughter in a convent, if I wish it ?

TOI. No ; I tell you.

ARG. Who shall prevent me?

TOI. Yourself.

ARG. I!

TOI. Yes. You will not have the heart.

ARG. I shall have it.

TOI. You are jesting.

ARG. I am not jesting at all.

TOI. Your paternal tenderness will prevent you.

ARG. It will not prevent me.

TOI. A little tear or two, arms thrown round the neck, "My darling little papa," tenderly pronounced, will be enough to touch you.

ARG. All that will have no effect.

TOI. Yes, yes.

ARG. I tell you that I shall not go back from it.

TOI. Nonsense.

ARG. You must not say, Nonsense.

TOI. Good Heavens! I know you, you are naturally kind-hearted.

ARG. (*Getting angry*). I am not kind-hearted, and I am very spiteful when I wish to be so.¹⁶

TOI. Gently, Sir. You forget that you are ill.

ARG. I absolutely command her to prepare herself to take the husband I tell her.

TOI. And I absolutely forbid her to do anything of the kind.

ARG. Where in the world are we? and in what sort of audacity is this, for a slut of a servant to talk in this manner before her master?

TOI. When a master forgets what he is doing, a sensible servant has a right to correct him.

ARG. (*Running after Toinette*). Ah! you insolent hussy, I shall have to knock you down.

TOI. (*Avoiding Argan, placing a chair between herself and him*). It is my duty to oppose myself to things which might disgrace you.

ARG. (*Running round the chair, with his stick, after Toinette*). Come here, come, that I may teach you how to speak.

¹⁶ This dialogue is copied almost literally from the Sixth Scene of the First Act of *The Rogueries of Scapin*.

TOI. (*Dodging away at the opposite side*). I interest myself, as I ought to do, not to let you commit any folly.

ARG. (*Same business*). You slut!

TOI. (*Same business*). No, I shall never consent to this marriage.

ARG. (*Same business*). You good-for-nothing.

TOI. (*Same business*). I will not have her marry your Thomas Diafoirus.

ARG. (*Same business*). Baggage!

TOI. (*Same business*). She will obey me rather than you.

ARG. (*Stopping*). Angélique, will you not stop this slut for me?

AN. Eh! father, do not make yourself ill.

ARG. (*To Angélique*). If you do not stop her for me, I will give you my curse.

TOI. (*Going*). And I shall disinherit her, if she obeys you.

ARG. (*Throwing himself in his chair*). Ah! Ah! I am exhausted. This is enough to kill me.¹⁷

SCENE VI.—BÉLINE, ARGAN.

ARG. Ah! wife, come here.

BEL. What ails you, my poor husband?

ARG. Come here to my assistance.

BEL. But what is the matter, dear?

ARG. My darling!

BEL. My pet!

ARG. I have been put into a passion.

BEL. Alas! poor dear husband! But how, my friend?

ARG. Your slut of a Toinette has been more insolent than ever.

BEL. Do not excite yourself.

ARG. She has put me into a rage, my dear.

BEL. Gently, my son.

ARG. During an hour, she has opposed the things which I wish to do.

BEL. There, there, gently.

¹⁷ Compare the Second Scene of the Second Act of *Tartuffe*. (See Vol. II.)

ARG. And she has had the effrontery to tell me that I am not ill.

BEL. She is an impertinent hussey.

ARG. You know, my heart, what is the case.

BEL. Yes, my heart, she is wrong.

ARG. My love, this wretch will kill me.

BEL. Eh! eh!

ARG. She is the cause of all my bile.

BEL. Do not get so angry.

ARG. And I have told you, I do not know how often, to get rid of her.

BEL. Good Heavens! child, there are neither men nor women servants who have not their faults. One is often obliged to put up with their bad qualities, for the sake of their good ones. This one is handy, careful, diligent, and above all faithful; and you know that we must be very cautious now-a-days with the folks we take.¹⁸ Hullo! Toinette!

SCENE VII.—ARGAN, BÉLINE, TOINETTE.

TOI. Madam.

BEL. Why do you put my husband into a passion?

TOI. (*In a coaxing tone*). I, Madam? Alas! I do not know what you mean, and I strive to please master in everything.

ARG. Oh! the wretch!

TOI. He told us that he wished to give his daughter in marriage to the son of Mr. Diafoirus: I answered him that I thought that the match was advantageous to her, but that I believed he would do better to put her into a convent.

BEL. There is not much harm in that, and I think that she is right.

ARG. Ah! my love, do you believe her? She is a good-for-nothing; she has said a hundred insolent things to me.

BEL. Well! I believe you, my friend. There, calm yourself. Listen, Toinette: if ever you vex my husband,

¹⁸ This defence of Toinette by Béline shows that she afterwards intends to use her; but we have already seen in the servant's exclamation "What an innocent woman!" that Toinette knows her well.

I will put you out of the house. There, now give me his furred cloak and some pillows, that I may make him comfortable in his chair. You are I do not know how. Pull your cap well over your ears : there is nothing that gives cold like catching a draught in the ears.

ARG. Ah ! my dear, how obliged I am for all the care you take of me.

BEL. (*Arranging the pillows which she puts round Argan*). Just lift yourself, that I may put this under you. Let us place this one to lean upon, and that one on the other side. Let us put this one behind your back, and the other one to support your head.

TOI. (*Rudely putting a pillow on his head*). And this one to keep the night dew away from you.

ARG. (*Rising and throwing his pillows at Toinette, who runs away*). Ah, you wretch ! you want to stifle me.

SCENE VIII.—ARGAN, BÉLINE.

BEL. Hullo ! hullo ! What is the matter now ?

ARG. (*Throwing himself into his chair*). Ah ! ah ! ah ! I am exhausted.

BEL. Why get into such a passion ? She thought of doing right.

ARG. My love, you do not know the spitefulness of the good-for-nothing. Ah ! she has entirely put me out ; and I shall want more than eight doses of medicine and twelve enemias to put all this right.

BEL. There, there, my little dear, try to quiet yourself a little.

ARG. My darling, you are my only consolation.

BEL. Poor dear child !

ARG. To try to acknowledge the love which you have for me, my heart, I wish, as I have told you, to make my will.

BEL. Ah, my friend, do not let us speak of this, I pray ; I cannot bear the thought ; and the very word, will, makes me shudder with pain.

ARG. I had told you to speak about it to your notary.

BEL. He is just inside. I brought him with me.

ARG. Make him come in, my love.

BEL. Alas! my friend, when one loves a husband well, one is hardly able to think of all this.

SCENE IX.—MR. DE BONNEFOI, BÉLINE, ARGAN.

ARG. Draw near, Mr. de Bonnefoi; draw near. Take a seat, if you please. My wife has told me, Sir, that you are a very honest man, and altogether her friend; and I have told her to speak to you about a will which I wish to make.

BEL. Alas! I am not able to talk of these matters.

MR. DE B. She has explained your intentions to me, Sir, and what you purpose to do for her; and I must tell you on this score that you cannot give anything to your wife by your will.

ARG. But why?

MR. DE B. Common law is opposed to it. If you were in a country where there is statute law, it could be done; but in Paris, and in all the countries where common law exists, at least in most of them, this cannot be; and the disposition would be invalid. All the good which man and woman joined in wedlock can do to each other, is a mutual gift while living; and then there must be no children, either of the two contracting parties, or of one of them, at the time of decease of the one who dies first.¹⁹

ARG. This is a very impertinent custom, that a husband can leave nothing to a wife by whom he is tenderly beloved, and who takes so much care of him! I would feel inclined to consult my barrister, to see how I might act.

MR. DE B. It is not to barristers that you must go; for they are, as a rule, very strict on these matters, and imagine that it is a great crime to dispose of property contrary to law: they are people of difficulties, who are ignorant of the intricacies of one's conscience. There are other people to consult, who are very much more accommodating, who have expedients to glide gently over the law, and to make that right which is not allowed; who know how to smooth the difficulties of an affair, and to find means of eluding custom by some indirect advantage.

¹⁹ This is according to articles 280 and 282 of the ancient Common Law of Paris.

Without this, where should we be every day? There must be some elasticity in affairs; otherwise we should do nothing, and I would not give a halfpenny for our profession.

ARG. My wife has indeed told me, Sir, that you are a very able and a very honest man. How am I to do, if you please, to give her my property, and to deprive my children of it?

MR. DE B. How are you to do? You can quietly choose an intimate friend of your wife's, to whom you will give, in due form, by your will, all that you can; and this friend shall afterwards give it all back to her. You can also contract a great many plausible obligations for the benefit of various creditors who will lend their names to your wife, and into whose hands they will put a declaration that what they did was only to benefit her. You can also, while you are alive, put into her hands ready money, or bills which you may make payable to the bearer.

BEL. Good Heavens! you must not torment yourself about all that. If you should happen to die, I should no longer remain in this world.

ARG. My darling!

BEL. Yes, my friend, if I am unfortunate enough to lose you . . .

ARG. My dear wife!

BEL. Life will no longer be anything to me.

ARG. My love!

BEL. And I shall follow you, to show the tenderness I have for you.

ARG. My darling, you rend my heart! Console yourself, I pray you.

MR. DE B. (*To Beline*). These tears are unseasonable. Matters have not come to that yet.

BEL. Ah! Sir, you do not know what a husband is whom one loves tenderly.

ARG. All the regret which I shall have, if I die, my dear, is not to have a child by you. Mr. Purgon had told me that I should have one.

MR. DE B. This may come yet.

ARG. I must make my will, love, in the manner this gentleman says; but as a precaution, I will put into your

hands the twenty thousand francs in gold which I have in the wainscoting of the recess of my bed, and two bills payable to the bearer, one from Mr. Damon, and the other from Mr. Gérante.

BEL. No, no, I will have nothing of all this. By the bye ! . . . how much say you is there in your recess ?

ARG. Two thousand francs, my love.

BEL. Do not speak to me of property, I pray you. By the bye ! . . . for how much are the two bills.

ARG. They are, my dear, one for four thousand francs, and the other for six.

BEL. All the riches in the world, my friend, are nothing compared with you.

MR. DE B. (*To Argan*). Shall we proceed to the making of the will ?

ARG. Yes, Sir ; but we shall be more at ease in my little study. Pray, my love, conduct me.

BEL. Come, my poor dear child.

SCENE X.—ANGÉLIQUE, TOINETTE.

TOI. They are with a notary and I heard them speaking about a will. Your step-mother does not go to sleep ; and it is no doubt some conspiracy against your interests to which she drives your father.

AN. Let him dispose of his property according as he likes, provided he does not dispose of my heart. You see, Toinette, the violent designs which they have upon it. Do not abandon me, I pray you, in the strait I am in.

TOI. I, abandon you ! I would rather die. Your step-mother may make me her confidante, and draw me in to her interests as much as she likes, I was never able to like her ; and have always been on your side. Let me manage ; I shall do everything to serve you ; but, to do so with more effect, I shall change my tactics, conceal the interest I take in you, and pretend to enter into the feelings of your father and step-mother.

AN. Try, I beseech you, to send Cléante word of the marriage that has been resolved upon.

TOI. I have no one that I can employ for this errand but the old usurer, Punch, my lover ; and it will cost me

some sweet words, which I do not begrudge for your sake.²⁰ To-day it is too late, but the first thing to-morrow I shall send for him, and he will be delighted to . . .

SCENE XI.—BÉLINE *in the house*, ANGÉLIQUE, TOINETTE.

BEL. Toinette !

TOI. (*To Angélique*). I am being called. Good-night. Rely upon me.

FIRST INTERLUDE.

The Scene changes and represent a town.

Punch, in the night, comes to serenade his mistress. He is first of all interrupted by the violins, with which he gets into a passion, and afterwards by the watch, composed of dancers and musicians.

PUNCH. (*Alone*). O, love, love, love, love ! Poor Punch, what a deuce of a fancy has got into your brain ! What are you amusing yourself with, wretched idiot that you are ? You leave the care of your business, and let your affairs go anyhow ; you no longer eat, you do hardly drink, you lose your rest at night ; and all this, for whom ? For a dragon, a downright dragon ; a she-devil who repulses you, and mocks at all you say to her. But it is no good arguing on that point. You will it so, Cupid : one must be a fool, like many others. It is not the wisest thing for a man of my age ; but what can I do to it ? One cannot be wise when one will, and old brains get out of order as well as young ones. I have come to see if I cannot soften my tigress by a serenade. At times there is nothing so touching as a lover who comes to sing his complaints to the bolts and bars of his mistress's door. (*After having taken his lute*). Here is something to accompany my voice with. Oh night ! O dear night ! carry my love-sick complaints to the bed of my obdurate one.

²⁰ Toinette mentions Punch only to introduce the following Interlude.

Night and day I love and adore you.
I seek a yes that shall restore me;
But if you answer, No,
Fair ingrate, I shall die.

Hope deferred
Makes the heart sick;
And far from you
It consumes its hours.
This sweet error
That does persuade me
That my grief is about to end,
Alas! lasts too long.
Thus, through loving you too much, I languish
and I die.

Night and day I love and adore you.
I seek a yes that shall restore me;
But if you answer, No,
Fair ingrate, I shall die.

If you are not asleep,
Think at least
Of the wounds
You give to my heart.
Ah! pretend at least,
For my consolation,
If you will kill me,
To be in the wrong;
Your pity will assuage my martyrdom.

Night and day I love and adore you.
I seek a yes that shall restore me;
But if you answer, No,
Fair ingrate, I shall die.²¹

²¹ The original is in Italian.

SCENE II.—PUNCH, AN OLD WOMAN, SHOWING HERSELF AT THE WINDOW, AND ANSWERING PUNCH, MOCKING HIM.

OLD WOMAN. (*Sings.*)—

Gallants, who, at every moment, with deceitful looks,
And lying wishes,
And false sighs,
And perfidious tones,
Pride yourself on being faithful,
Ah! do not deceive yourselves.
From experience I know
That neither constancy nor faithfulness
Is to be found in you.

Ah! how foolish is she who believes you!

These languishing regards
Do not inspire me with any love,
These ardent sighs
Do not inflame me,
I swear to you on my faith.
Unhappy gallant!
My heart, insensible to your complaint,
Will ever laugh at it:
Believe me;
For from experience I know
That neither constancy nor faithfulness
Is to be found in you.

Ah! how foolish is she who believes you!²²

SCENE III.—PUNCH, VIOLINS BEHIND THE SCENES.

The violins commence an air.

PUNCH. What impertinent harmony comes to interrupt my song!

The violins continue to play.

PUNCH. Peace, there! be still, you violins. Let me bewail at my ease the cruelties of my inexorable fair one.

The violins continue.

PUNCH. Keep still, I tell you: it is I who wish to sing.

²² The original is also in Italian.

The violins continue.

PUNCH. Silence then!

The violins continue.

PUNCH. Good gracious!

The violins continue.

PUNCH. Ah!

The violins continue.

PUNCH. Is this in fun?

The violins continue.

PUNCH. Ah! what a noise!

The violins continue.

PUNCH. May the devil take you!

The violins continue.

PUNCH. I am bursting with rage!

The violins continue.

PUNCH. You will not be still then! Ah! Heaven be praised!

The violins continue.

PUNCH. What! again?

The violins continue.

PUNCH. A plague upon these violins!

The violins continue.

PUNCH. What silly music this!

The violins continue.

PUNCH. (*Singing, in imitation of the violins*). La, la, la, la, la, la.

The violins continue.

PUNCH. (*Same*). La, la, la, la, la, la.

The violins continue.

PUNCH. (*Same*). La, la, la, la, la, la.

The violins continue.

PUNCH. (*Same*). La, la, la, la, la, la.

The violins continue.

PUNCH. (*Same*). La, la, la, la, la, la.

The violins continue.

PUNCH. Upon my word this amuses me. Go on, gentlemen violin-players ; you are giving me great pleasure. (*No longer hearing anything*). But continue, I pray you.

Scene IV. Punch, alone.

This is the way to quiet them. Music is accustomed not to do what we wish. And now, it is my turn. I must prelude a bit, and play a little piece before singing, so as the better to catch my tone. (*He takes his lute, upon which he pretends to play, imitating with his lips and tongue the sound of that instrument*). Plan, plan, plan, plin, plin, plin. This is a nasty time to tune a lute to. Plin, plin, plin. Plin, tan, plan. Plin, plan. The strings do not hold in such weather. Plin, plin. I hear some noise. Let us put our lute against the door.

Scene V.—Punch ; Archers passing in the street, attracted by the noise which they hear.

ARCH. (*Singing*). Who goes there ! who goes there ?

PUNCH. (*Softly*). What the devil is that ? Is it the fashion to speak in music ?

ARCH. Who goes there ? who goes there ? who goes there ?

PUNCH. (*Frightened*). I, I, I.

ARCH. Who goes there ? who goes there ? I ask you.

PUNCH. I, I, I tell you.

ARCH. And who are you ? who are you ?

PUNCH. I, I, I, I, I, I.

ARCH. Tell your name, tell your name, without delaying longer.

PUNCH. (*Pretending to be courageous*). My name is, Go and get yourself hanged.

ARCH. Here, comrades, here.

And seize the insolent who answers us thus.

First Entry of the Ballet.

The whole of the watch come, seeking for Punch in the dark.

Violins and Dancers.

PUNCH. Who goes there?

Violins and Dancers.

PUNCH. Who are the scoundrels whom I hear?

Violins and Dancers.

PUNCH. Ugh!

Violins and Dancers.

PUNCH. Hullo! my servants! my lacqueys!

Violins and Dancers.

PUNCH. S'death!

Violins and Dancers.

PUNCH. S'blood!

Violins and Dancers.

PUNCH. I shall knock some of them down.

Violins and Dancers.

PUNCH. Here! Champagne, Poitevin, Picard, Basque, Breton.²³

Violins and Dancers.

PUNCH. Just hand me my musket. . . .

Violins and Dancers.

PUNCH. (*Pretending to discharge a Pistol*). Paff.
(*They all fall down, and run away afterwards*).

SCENE VI.—PUNCH (*Alone*).

Ah! ah! ah! ah! what a fright I have given them! They must be silly people to be afraid of me, who am afraid of others. Upon my word, there is nothing like being artful in this world. If I had not imitated the

²³ See *Pretentious Young Ladies*, Vol. I., page 162, note 40.

grand nobleman, and pretended to be brave, they would not have failed to lock me up. Ah! ah! ah! (*The Archers draw near, and having heard what he said, catch him by the collar*).

SCENE VII.—PUNCH; ARCHERS, *singing*.

ARCH. (*Seizing Punch*).

We have got him. Here, comrades, here!

Make haste; bring a light.

(*The whole of the watch come with lanterns*).

SCENE VIII.—PUNCH; ARCHERS, *dancing and singing*.

ARCH. Ah! traitor; ah! rogue, it is you?

Wretch, cur, hangdog, impudent, audacious,

Insolent, brazen-faced fellow, scoundrel, cut-purse thief,

You dare give us a fright!

PUNCH. Gentlemen, it is because I was drunk.

ARCH. No, no, no; no arguing:

We must teach you to behave.

To prison, quick, to prison.

PUNCH. Gentlemen, I am not a thief.

ARCH. To prison.

PUNCH. I am a citizen of the town.

ARCH. To prison.

PUNCH. What have I done?

ARCH. To prison, quick, to prison.

PUNCH. Let me go, gentlemen.

ARCH. No.

PUNCH. I beseech you!

ARCH. No.

PUNCH. Eh!

ARCH. No.

PUNCH. I beseech you.

ARCH. No, no.

PUNCH. Gentlemen.

ARCH. No, no, no.

PUNCH. If you please!

ARCH. No, no.

PUNCH. For charity!

ARCH. No, no.

PUNCH. In Heaven's name !

ARCH. No, no.

PUNCH. Have mercy.

ARCH. No, no, no arguing,
We must teach you to behave.
To prison, quick, to prison.

PUNCH. Eh ! gentlemen, is there nothing capable of softening your hearts ?

ARCH. It is easy to move us ;
And we are more tender-hearted than you
would believe.
Only give us six pistoles to drink your health
with,
And we will let you go.

PUNCH. Alas ! gentlemen, I assure you that I have not a penny upon me.

ARCH. In default of six pistoles,
Choose then without ado
To receive thirty fillips,
Or twelve blows with the stick.

PUNCH. If it must be, and that I must pass through that, I choose the fillips.

ARCH. Come then, prepare yourself,
And count the fillips well.

Second Entry of the Ballet.

The dancing archers give him the fillips, keeping time with the music.

PUNCH. (*Counting the fillips which they are giving him*).
One and two, three and four, five and six, seven and eight, nine and ten, eleven and twelve, and thirteen, and fourteen, and fifteen.

ARCH. Ah ! ah ! you will pass through it !
Let us begin once more.

PUNCH. Ah ! gentlemen, my poor head can stand this no longer, and you have just made it like a cooked apple. I prefer the blows with the stick to your beginning again.

ARCH. Be it so. Since the stick has more charms for you,
You shall be satisfied.

Third Entry of the Ballet.

The dancing archers give him blows with the stick, keeping time to the music.

PUNCH. (*Counting the blows of the stick*). One, two, three, four, five, six. Ah! ah! ah! I can resist no longer. Here, gentlemen, here are six pistoles which I give you.

ARCH. Ah! what a gentleman! Ah! what a great and generous soul;

Good-bye, Sir; good-bye, Mr. Punch.

PUNCH. Gentlemen, I wish you good-night.

ARCH. Good-bye, Sir; good-bye, Mr. Punch.

PUNCH. Your servant.

ARCH. Good-bye, Sir; good-bye, Mr. Punch.

PUNCH. Your very humble servant.

ARCH. Good-bye, Sir; good-bye, Mr. Punch.

PUNCH. Until we meet again.

Fourth Entry of the Ballet.

They all dance from joy, at the money they have received.

ACT II.

The scene represents Argan's room.

SCENE I.—CLÉANTE, TOINETTE.

TOI. (*Not recognizing Cléante*). What is your pleasure, Sir?

CLE. What is your pleasure?

TOI. Ah! ah! it is you! What surprise! What come you to do here?

CLE. To learn my fate, to speak to the amiable Angélique, to consult the sentiments of her heart, and to ask her decision about this fatal match of which I have been informed.

TOI. Yes; but you cannot speak so inconsiderately to Angélique: it requires secrecy, and you have been told of the careful watch that is kept over her, that she is never allowed to go out, nor to speak to any one; and that it was only the curiosity of an old aunt, who ob-

tained permission for us to go to this comedy, which gave rise to your passion ; and we have taken good care not to speak of this adventure.

CLE. For this reason do I not come as Cléante, and in the guise of her lover ; but as a friend of her music-teacher, of whom I have obtained leave to say that he sends me in his stead.

TOI. Here comes her father. Just retire a little, and let me tell him that you are there.

SCENE II.—ARGAN, TOINETTE.

ARG. (*Believing himself alone, and not noticing Toinette*). Mr. Purgon has told me to walk about this morning, in my room, a dozen times up and a dozen times down, but I have forgotten to ask him whether it should be the length or the breadth of the room.

TOI. Sir, here is a . . .

ARG. Speak low, you hang-dog. You shake my brain, and you forget that invalids should not be spoken to so loudly.

TOI. I wished to say to you, Sir . . .

ARG. Speak low, I tell you.

TOI. Sir . . .

(*She pretends to speak.*)

ARG. Eh?

TOI. I was telling you that . . .

(*She again pretends to speak.*)

ARG. What do you say?

TOI. (*Loud*). I say that there is a man who wishes to speak to you.

ARG. Let him come here. (*Toinette beckons Cléante to draw near*).

SCENE III.—ARGAN, CLÉANTE, TOINETTE.

CLE. Sir . . .

TOI. (*To Cléante*). Do not speak so loud, for fear of shaking master's brain.

CLE. Sir, I am charmed to find you up, and to see that you are convalescent.

TOI. (*Pretending to be angry*). How ! convalescent ! That is false. Master is always ill.

CLE. I heard it said that Mr. Argan was getting better ; and I find that he looks well.

TOI. What do you mean by "he looks well?" Master looks very bad; and they are impertinent fellows who have told you that he was better. He has never been worse.

ARG. She is right.

TOI. He walks, sleeps, eats and drinks like other people; but that does not prevent him from being very ill.

ARG. That is true.

CLE. I am sorely grieved, Sir. I come from your daughter's singing-master; he has been obliged to go into the country for a few days, and, as his intimate friend, he sends me in his stead to continue the lessons, for fear that, in interrupting them, she should forget what she already knows.

ARG. Very good. (*To Toinette*). Call Angélique.

TOI. I think, Sir, that it would be better to take this gentleman to her room.

ARG. No. Fetch her here.

TOI. He could not give her a proper lesson, if they be not alone.

ARG. Yes, yes.

TOI. It will upset you, Sir; and there should be nothing to excite you, and to shake your brain, in the state you are in.

ARG. Not at all, not at all: I love music, and I shall be glad to . . . Ah! here she is. (*To Toinette*). Go you and see, you, whether my wife is dressed.

SCENE IV.—ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, CLÉANTE.

ARG. Come here, daughter. Your music-master is gone to the country; and here is some one whom he sends in his stead to teach you.

AN. (*Recognizing Cléante*). Oh Heavens!

ARG. What is the matter? Whence this surprise?

AN. It is . . .

ARG. What? What moves you in this manner?

AN. It is a most surprising adventure that is happening here, father.

ARG. How?

AN. I dreamt last night that I was in the greatest difficulty, and that some one, just like this gentleman, pre-

sented himself to me, of whom I implored assistance, and who came to deliver me from the trouble in which I was ; and my surprise was great to see unexpectedly, on arriving here, what was in my mind all night.

CLE. It is being very fortunate to occupy your thoughts, whether sleeping or waking ; and my happiness would be great, no doubt, if you were in some danger, from which you deemed me worthy to extricate you. There is nothing I would not do to . . .

SCENE V.—ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, CLÉANTE, TOINETTE.

TOI. (*To Argan*). Upon my word, Sir, I am entirely on your side this time, and I retract everything which I said yesterday. Here are Mr. Diafoirus, the father, and Mr. Diafoirus, his son, who come to pay you a visit. What a nice son-in-law you will have ! You shall see the handsomest young fellow possible, and the wittiest. He has said but two words which have delighted me, and your daughter will be charmed with him.

ARG. (*To Cléante, who pretends to go*). Do not go, Sir. My daughter is about to be married, and her intended, whom she has not seen as yet, has just come.

CLE. It is doing me a great honour, Sir, to wish me to assist at so pleasant an interview.

ARG. He is the son of a very able physician ; and the marriage is to take place in four days.

CLE. Very good.

ARG. Just mention it to her music-master, so that he may be at the wedding.

CLE. I will not fail to do so.

ARG. I invite you also.

CLE. You are doing me much honour.

TOI. Come, let us place ourselves in position ; here they are.

SCENE VI.—MR. DIAFOIRUS, THOMAS DIAFOIRUS, ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, CLÉANTE, TOINETTE, A LACQUEY.

ARG. (*Putting his hand to his cap, without taking it off*). Mr. Purgon, Sir, has forbidden me to uncover my head. You belong to the profession : you know the consequences.

MR. D. In all our visits we aim at bringing help to those who are ill, and not inconvenience.

(*Argan and Mr. Diafoirus speak at the same time.*).

ARG. I receive, Sir,

MR. D. We come here, Sir,

ARG. With great joy,

MR. D. My son Thomas, and I,

ARG. The honour which you do me,

MR. D. To assure you, Sir,

ARG. And I should have wished . . .

MR. D. How delighted we are . . .

ARG. To be able to go to you . . .

MR. D. At the graciousness you show us . . .

ARG. To assure you of it ;

MR. D. In receiving us . . .

ARG. But you know, Sir,

MR. D. To the honour, Sir,

ARG. What it is to be a poor invalid,

MR. D. Of your alliance ;

ARG. Who can do nothing else . . .

MR. D. And to assure you . . .

ARG. Than to tell you in this spot . . .

MR. D. That in all things pertaining to our profession,

ARG. That, he will seek every opportunity . . .

MR. D. As well as in everything else,

ARG. To tell you, Sir,

MR. D. We shall always be prepared, Sir.

ARG. That he is entirely at your service.

MR. D. To prove our zeal to you. (*To his son*). Come Thomas, approach and pay your respects.

THOM. (*To Mr. Diafoirus*). Is it not with the father that I ought to begin ?²⁴

MR. D. Yes.

THOM. (*To Argan*). Sir, I come to salute, to acknowledge, to cherish, and to revere in you a second father, but a second father to whom, I make bold to say, I find myself more indebted than to the first. The first engendered me ; but

²⁴ In the edition of Molière's works of 1682 is the following note : " Mr. Thomas Diafoirus is a great booby, having newly left the schools, and doing everything awkwardly and at the wrong time."

you have chosen me ; he received me through necessity, but you have accepted me out of kindness.²⁵ What I have from him is the work of his body ; but what I have from you is the work of your will ; and inasmuch as the spiritual faculties are above the corporal, so much the more do I owe you, and so much the more do I hold precious this future filiation, of which I come this day to render to you, before-hand, the very humble and very respectful homage.

TOI. Long life to the colleges which turn out so able a man !

THOM. (*To Mr. Diafoirus*). Has this been right, father ?

MR. D. Optime.

ARG. (*To Angélique*). Come, salute this gentleman.

THOM. (*To Mr. Diafoirus*). Shall I kiss her ?²⁶

MR. D. Yes, yes.

THOM. (*To Angélique*). Madam, it is with justice, that Heaven has conceded you the title of stepmother, since we . . .

ARG. (*To Thomas Diafoirus*). This is not my wife, it is my daughter to whom you are speaking.

THOM. Where is she then ?

ARG. She will be here directly.

THOM. Shall I wait, father, until she comes ?

MR. D. Offer your compliments to the young lady.

THOM. Miss, neither more nor less than the statue of Memnon gave forth an harmonious sound, when it was illuminated by the rays of the sun, so do I feel myself animated by a sweet transport of the appearance of the sun of your charms ;²⁷ and as naturalists observe that the flower named heliotrope turns incessantly towards that star of the day, so shall my heart henceforth turn towards the resplendent star of your adorable eyes, as to its only pole. Permit me then, Miss, to bring to-day to the altar of your charms the offer of that heart which aspires and

²⁵ This beginning seems imitated from a passage of a speech of Cicero — *Ad Quirites, post reditum*.

²⁶ In the Elzevir edition of this play we find here : " He first makes a bow, and then turns his face towards his father. Isabelle (Angélique) receives the kiss with great disdain, while turning her head towards Cato (Toinette)."

²⁷ The Abbé d'Aubignac, in a dissertation against Corneille, uses nearly the same simile.

aims at no other glory than to be, all its life, Miss, your very humble, very obedient, and very faithful servant and husband.

TOI. See what it is to study ! one learns to say beautiful things.

ARG. (*To Cléante*). Eh ! What say you to this ?

CLE. That this gentleman does wonders, and that, if he be as good a physician as he is an orator, it would be a pleasure to be counted among his patients.

TOI. Assuredly. It will be something admirable, if his cures are as good as the speeches which he makes.

ARG. Come, quick, my chair, and seats for everybody. (*Servants hand chairs*). Place yourself there, daughter. (*To Mr. Diafoirus*). You see, Sir, that everyone admires your son ; and I think you very fortunate in finding yourself possessed of such a boy.

MR. D. Sir, it is not because I am his father ; but I can say that I have reason to be satisfied with him, and that all who see him speak of him as a youth who has no harm in him. He never had a very lively imagination, nor that brilliant wit which is noticed in some ; but it is exactly on this account that I have argued well of his judgment, a quality requisite for the exercise of our art. He never was, when little, what they call sharp and wide-awake ; he was always seen to be gentle, peaceable and taciturn, never saying a word and never playing at those little games which are called infantine. They had all the difficulty in the world in teaching him to read, and at nine years of age, he did not yet know his letters. Good, said I to myself, the backward trees are those that bear the best fruit. One cuts into marble with far more difficulty than into sand ; but things are preserved much longer there ; and that slowness of apprehension, that dulness of imagination, is the sign of a future good judgment. When I sent him to college, he found it very hard, but he bore up against the difficulties ; and his tutors always praised him to me for his assiduity and his application. In short, by dint of hammering, he has gloriously obtained his diplomas ; and I may say, without vanity, that in the two years after he took his degree, there is no candidate who has made more noise than he in all the disputes of our school.

He has rendered himself formidable ; and there is no act propounded upon which he does not argue as long as he can for the contrary proposition. He is firm in a dispute, strenuous as a Turk in his principles, and pursues an argument into the farthest recesses of logic. But, that which above all pleases me in him, and in which he follows my example, is that he attaches himself blindly to the opinions of the ancients, and that he never would understand or listen to the reasonings and experiments of the pretended discoveries of our age in reference to the circulation of the blood, and other opinions of the same kind.²⁸

THOM. (*Drawing from his pocket a large thesis rolled up, which he presents to Angélique*). I have defended a thesis against the circulators, which, with the permission of your father (*Bowing to Argan*), I make bold to offer to this young lady, as a homage which I owe to her of the first fruits of my mind.

AN. It is a useless piece of furniture to me, Sir, and I am no judge in these matters.

TOI. (*Taking the thesis*). Give it all the same ; it is worth taking for the picture ; it will do to decorate our room.

THOM. (*Again bowing to Argan*). Once more, with the permission of your father, I invite you to come and see, one of these days, for your amusement, the dissection of a woman, upon which I am to lecture.

TOI. The entertainment will be pleasant. There are some people who treat their mistresses to a comedy ; but to provide a dissection is more gallant.

MR. D. For the rest, as regards the requisite qualities for wedlock and propagation, I assure you that, according to the rules of our physicians, he is such as could be wished for ; that he possesses in a praiseworthy degree the prolific virtue, and that he is of the proper temperament to engender and procreate well-conditioned children.

ARG. Is it not your intention, Sir, to push him at

²⁸ Harvey discovered the circulation of the blood in 1619, and many discussions took place in France on that subject, which were not completely ended when Molière's last play was performed. This same year (1673) Louis XIV. instituted at the *Jardin des Plantes* a special chair for anatomy.

Court, and to procure for him the place of a physician in ordinary?

MR. D. To speak frankly to you, our profession when near the great has never appeared pleasant to me; and I have always found that it does better for us to remain with the public. The public is easy to deal with; you are responsible for your actions to no one; and provided you follow the current of the rules of your art, you need not be uneasy about what may happen. But what is vexatious with the great, is that, when they fall ill, they absolutely wish their physicians to cure them.

TOI. That is funny! and they are very impertinent to wish you gentlemen to cure them! You are not near them for that; you are there only to receive your fees, and to order them remedies; it is for them to get better, if they can.

MR. D. That is true; one is only obliged to treat people according to the rules.

ARG. (*To Cléante*). Just make my daughter sing a little before the company, Sir.

CLÉ. I was awaiting your orders, Sir; and an idea has just struck me, to entertain the company, to sing with the lady a scene from an operetta which has lately been composed. (*To Angélique, giving her a paper*). There, this is your part.

AN. I?

CLÉ. (*Softly to Angélique*). Do not make any objection to it, pray, and let me make you understand what the scene is which we are to sing. (*Aloud*). I have no voice for singing; but in this case it is sufficient that I can make myself heard; and you will have the kindness to excuse me, by the necessity under which I find myself to make the young lady sing.²⁹

ARG. Is the poetry good?

CLÉ. It is properly called a little improvised opera; and you will only hear sung rhythmical prose, or some sort of blank verse, such as affection and necessity might suggest

²⁹ A similar scene is also to be found in *The Blunderer* (see Vol. I.), *The School for Husbands* (see Vol. I.), *Love is the Physician* (see Vol. II.), *The Sicilian* (see Vol. II.), and *The Miser* (see Vol. III.)

to two persons, who say those things out of their own heads, and speak on the spur of the moment.

ARG. Very good. Let us listen.

CLE. This is the plot of the scene: A shepherd was attentively watching the beauties of a spectacle which had just commenced, when his attention was disturbed by a noise which he heard at his side. He turns round, and sees a coarse fellow, who with insolent words insults a shepherdess. Immediately he espouses the interests of that sex to which all men owe homage; and after having given the coarse fellow the punishment due to his insolence, he comes back to the shepherdess, and beholds a young person, who, from the most lovely eyes which he had ever seen, drops tears which he thinks the most beautiful in the world. Alas! says he to himself, can people be capable of insulting so amiable a being! and what inhuman monster, what barbarian would not be touched by such tears? He busies himself to stop them, these tears which he thinks so beautiful; and the gentle shepherdess takes care at the same time to thank him for his slight service, but in a manner so charming, so tender and so impassioned, that the shepherd cannot resist it; and every glance, is a dart full of fire with which his heart feels itself pierced. Is there ought, said he, that could deserve the sweet words of such an acknowledgment? And what would we not do, to what services, to what dangers would we not feel delighted to run, to attract to ourselves, but for one moment, the moving tenderness of so grateful a heart! The whole of the spectacle is enacted without his paying the least attention to it; but he complains that it is too short, for the end will separate him from his adorable shepherdess; and from this first sight, from this first moment, he brings back with him all that can be most intense in a passion of several years' duration. Behold him immediately experiencing all the ills of absence, and he is tortured by seeing no longer her whom he has seen such a short time. He does all he can to enjoy this sight once more, of which he preserves night and day so precious a recollection; but the great restraint under which his shepherdess is kept deprives him of every opportunity. The violence of his passion makes him resolve to ask for

the hand of the adorable fair one, without whom he can no longer live ; and he obtains her permission by means of a note which he has the skill to have conveyed to her. But, at the same time, he is informed that the father of his fair one has projected a marriage with some one else, and that everything is being prepared to celebrate the ceremony.³⁰ Judge how cruel is the blow to the heart of this sad shepherd ! Behold him overwhelmed by a mortal grief ; he cannot bear the horrible thought of seeing all he loves in the arms of another ; and in despair, his love makes him find the means of introducing himself into the house of his shepherdess to learn her feelings, and to know from her the fate to which he is to submit. He there meets with the preparations for all that he fears ; he witnesses the coming of the unworthy rival whom the whims of a father oppose to the tenderness of his love ; he sees him triumphant, this ridiculous rival, near the gentle shepherdess, as if the conquest were sure ; and this sight fills him with anger which he can scarcely master ; he darts painful glances at her whom he adores ; and the respect for her, and the presence of her father, prevent his saying anything to her except by his looks ; but at last he breaks through all restraint, and the transport of his passion obliges him thus to speak—(*He sings*)

Beauteous Philis, it is too much, it is too
much to suffer ;

Let us break this cruel silence, and bare your
thoughts to me.

Tell me my fate.

Am I to live ? am I to die ?

AN. (*Singing*). You behold me, Tircis, sad and melan-
choly,

At the preparations for the marriage which alarms
you.

To Heaven I lift my eyes, I look at you, I sigh ;

Need I to tell you more ?

³⁰ Molière has borrowed this tale of Cléante most probably from the Spanish of Francisco de Roxas, which had already been used by Thomas Corneille, in *Don Bertrand de Cigarral*, a comedy, performed in 1650.

ARG. Lack-a-day! I did not think that my daughter was so clever as to sing thus at first sight, without hesitating.

CLE. Alas! fair Philis,
Can it be that the enamoured Tircis
Could be happy enough
To find a place in your heart?

AN. I do not refuse to acknowledge it, in this exceeding grief;
Yes, Tircis, I love you.

CLE. O word full of charms!
Have I heard rightly? Alas!
Say it once more, Philis, so that I may not doubt.

AN. Yes, Tircis, I love you.

CLE. For mercy's sake, once more, Philis.

AN. I love you.

CLE. Repeat it a hundred times; do not get weary.

AN. I love you, I love you;
Yes, Tircis, I love you.

CLE. Ye gods, ye kings, who look down upon the world
beneath your feet,
Can you compare your happiness with mine?
But, Philis, one thought
Comes to trouble this sweet bliss.
A rival, a rival . . .

AN. Ah! I hate him more than death;
And his presence is to me, as it is to you,
A cruel torture.

CLE. But a father wishes to compel you to obey his wishes.

AN. Sooner, sooner will I die
Than ever consent to it;
Sooner, sooner will I die, sooner will I die.³¹

ARG. And what says the father to all this?

CLE. He says nothing.

ARG. That is an idiot of a father, to suffer all this nonsense without saying anything.

³¹ La Grange and the wife of Molière had a great success in this scene, as it is said in the Sixth of the *Entretiens Galants, about Music*, published in Paris in 1681.

CLE. (*Wishing to continue to sing*).

Ah! my love . . .

ARG. No, no; this is enough of it. This comedy sets a very bad example. The shepherd Tircis is an impertinent fellow, and the shepherdess Philis is an impudent hussy to speak in that way before her father. (*To Angélique*). Show me this paper. Ah! ah! but where are the words which you have spoken? There is nothing but music written there?

CLE. Do not you know, Sir, that it has been recently invented to write the words with the notes in one? ³²

ARG. Very good. I am your servant, Sir; good-bye. We could have very well dispensed with your impertinent opera.

CLE. I thought to amuse you.

ARG. Nonsense does not amuse. Ah! here comes my wife.

SCENE VII.—BÉLINE, ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, MR. DIAFOIRUS, THOMAS DIAFOIRUS, TOINETTE.

ARG. My love, this is the son of Mr. Diafoirus.

THOM. Madam, it is with justice that Heaven has granted you the title of stepmother, for we see in your face . . . ³³

BEL. Sir, I am delighted to have come here opportunely, to enjoy the honour of seeing you.

THOM. For we see in your face . . . for we see in your face . . . Madam, you have interrupted me in the midst of my period, and that has confused my memory.

MR. D. Thomas, reserve this for another opportunity.

ARG. My pet, I would have wished you to be here just now.

TOI. Ah! Madam, you have lost a great deal in not having been here at the second father, at the statue of Memnon, and at the flower called heliotrope.

ARG. Come, daughter, put your hand in this gentleman's, and pledge him your faith, as to your husband.

³² In the Elzevir edition of the play, Cléante pretends that the words of the duet are old and well known.

³³ Thomas Diafoirus utters a compliment which he has studied, but cannot finish it. *Belle-mère* means stepmother, but *belle mère* handsome mother.

AN. Father . . .

ARG. Well! father! What does this mean.

AN. Pray, do not hurry matters. Give us at least time to know each other, and to see grow up in us that inclination for one another which is so necessary to form a perfect union.

THOM. As for me, Miss, it is already entirely grown up in me; and I have no need to wait any longer.

AN. If you are so prompt, Sir, it is not the same with me; and I confess to you that your merit has not as yet made any impression on my heart.

ARG. Oh! well, well; there will be ample leisure for that when you are married.

AN. Ah! father, give me some time, I pray you. Wedlock is a chain to which we should never subject a heart by force; and if this gentleman is a man of honour, he ought not to wish to accept a person who would be his by coercion.

THOM. *Nego consequentiam*, Miss; and I may be a man of honour, and still wish to accept you from the hands of your father.

AN. It is a bad means of making yourself beloved by any one by doing her violence.

THOM. We read of the ancients, Miss, that their custom was to carry away by force, from the homes of their fathers, the daughters who were led to marriage, so that it might not appear to be by their own consent that they flew into the arms of a man.

AN. The ancients, Sir, are the ancients; and we are the people of the present day. Pretences are not at all necessary in our age; and when a marriage pleases us, we know well enough how to go to it, without being dragged to it. Have patience; if you love me, Sir, you ought to wish everything that I wish.

THOM. Yes, Miss, up to the interests of my love, exclusively.

AN. But the great sign of love is to submit to the wishes of her whom we love.

THOM. *Distinguo*, Miss. In what concerns not her possession, *concedo*; but in what concerns it, *nego*.

TOI. You may argue as much as you please. The

gentleman is fresh from college, and he will always give you your answer. Why resist so much, and refuse the glory of being attached to the body of the faculty?

BEL. Perhaps she has some other inclination in her mind.

AN. If I had, Madam, it would be such as reason and honour would allow.

ARG. Good gracious ! I am acting a pretty part here.

BEL. If I were you, child, I should not force her to marry ; and I know well enough what I should do.

AN. I am aware, Madam, of what you mean, and of the kind feelings which you have towards me ; but your designs may not perhaps be so happy as to be executed.

BEL. It is because very circumspect and very respectable girls like you, do not care to be obedient and submissive to the wishes of their fathers. That was very well in times gone by.

AN. The duty of a daughter has its limits, Madam ; and neither reason nor the laws extend it to other matters.

BEL. This means that your ideas are not averse to marriage ; but that you wish to choose a husband according to your own fancy.

AN. If my father will not give me a husband whom I like, I shall beseech him, at least, not to force me to marry one whom I cannot love.

ARG. Gentlemen, I ask your pardon for all this.

AN. Every one has his own motive for marrying. As for me, who wish no husband but to truly love him, and who intend to make it a life-long attachment, I confess to you that I am somewhat cautious about it. There are some who take husbands only to emancipate themselves from the restraint of their parents, and to place themselves in a position to do as they like. There are others, Madam, who make marriage a commerce of sheer interest, who only wed in order to obtain jointures, to enrich themselves by the death of those whom they espouse, and run without scruple from husband to husband, to appropriate to themselves their spoils. These persons, in truth do not stand upon so many ceremonies, and have little regard to the persons themselves.

BEL. I find you in a great mood for arguing to-day, and I should like to know what you mean by this.

AN. I, Madam? What should I mean but what I say?

BEL. You are so silly, my dear, that there is no enduring you any longer.

AN. You would like to provoke me, Madam, into answering you by some impertinence; but I warn you that you shall not have the advantage.

BEL. Your insolence is matchless.

AN. No, Madam, you may say your best.

BEL. And you have a ridiculous pride, an impertinent presumption, which causes every one to shrug their shoulders.

AN. All this will be of no avail, Madam. I shall be prudent in spite of you; and to take away all hope of your succeeding in what you wish, I shall retire from your presence.

SCENE VIII.—ARGAN, BÉLINE, MR. DIAFOIRUS, THOMAS DIAFOIRUS, TOINETTE.

ARG. (*To Angelique, who is going*). Hark ye. There is no middle way in this case: make up your mind to marry this gentleman in four days, or a convent. (*To Beline*). Do not trouble yourself: I shall manage her properly.

BEL. I am sorry to leave you, child; but I have some business in town which I cannot delay. I shall soon be back again.

ARG. Go, my love, and call in at your notary, that he may attend to what you know.

BEL. Farewell, my little dear.

ARG. Good bye, darling.

SCENE IX.—ARGAN, MR. DIAFOIRUS, THOMAS DIAFOIRUS, TOINETTE.

ARG. There is a woman who loves me . . . it is not to be believed.

MR. D. We are going to take leave of you, Sir.

ARG. Pray, Sir, just tell me in what condition I am.

MR. D. (*Feeling the pulse of Argan*). Come, Thomas, take hold of the other arm of this gentleman, to see

whether you can form a good judgment of his pulse.
Quid dicis?

THOM. *Dico*, that this gentleman's pulse is the pulse of a man who is not in good health.

MR. D. Good,

THOM. That it is hardish not to say hard.

DR. D. Very well.

THOM. That it acts by fits and starts.

MR. D. *Bene*

THOM. And even a little irregular.

MR. D. *Optime*.

THOM. Which is a sign of intemperature in the *splenic parenchyma*, which means the milt.

MR. D. Very good.

ARG. No; Mr. Purgon says that it is my liver which is not right.

MR. D. Well, yes: whosoever says *parenchyma*, says the one and the other, on account of the close sympathy there is between them through the *vas breve*, the *pylorus*, and often through the *meatus cholidici*. He no doubt orders you to eat much roast meat.

ARG. No; nothing but boiled.

MR. D. Well, yes: roast, boiled, the same thing. He prescribes very carefully for you, and you cannot be in better hands.

ARG. Sir, how many grains of salt ought there to be put in an egg?

MR. D. Six, eight, ten, in even numbers, just as in medicine in odd numbers.

ARG. Until we meet again, Sir.

SCÈNE X.—BÉLINE, ARGAN.

BEL. I have come, child, before going out, to inform you of something to which you ought to look. In passing by Angélique's room, I noticed a young man with her, who ran away the moment he saw me.

ARG. A young man with my daughter!

BEL. Yes. Your little daughter Louison was with them, who can tell you particulars about it.

ARG. Send her here, my love, send her here. Ah! the

bold hussy. (*Alone*). I am no longer astonished at her resistance.

SCENE XI.—ARGAN, LOUISE.

LOU. What do you wish with me, papa? My step-mother has told me that you want me.

ARG. Yes. Come here. Come closer. Turn round. Turn up your eyes. Look at me. Eh?

LOU. What, papa?

ARG. So?

LOU. What?

ARG. Have you nothing to tell me?

LOU. I will tell you, if you like, to amuse you, the story of *The Donkey's Skin*, or the fable of *The Raven and the Fox*, which I have been taught lately.³⁵

ARG. That is not what I ask you.

LOU. What then?

ARG. Ah! you sly girl, you know very well what I mean!

LOU. I beg your pardon, papa.

ARG. Is it thus that you obey me?

LOU. What?

ARG. Did I not recommend you to come and tell me directly all that you see?

LOU. Yes, papa.

ARG. Have you done so?

LOU. Yes, papa. I have come and told you everything I saw.

ARG. And have you seen nothing to-day?

LOU. No, papa.

ARG. No?

LOU. No, papa.

ARG. You are sure?

LOU. I am sure.

ARG. Oh! very well; I shall let you see something.

LOU. (*Noticing some switches which Argan has taken up*). Oh! papa.

³⁵ Perrault published the story of *Peru d'Ane* (the Donkey's Skin), in 1694, and as *The Imaginary Invalid* was performed in 1673, it is a proof that it was well known long before it was published.

ARG. Ah! Ah! you little deceiver, you do not tell me that you have seen a man in your sister's room!

LOU. (*Crying*). Papa!

ARG. (*Taking Louison by the arm*). This will teach you to tell lies.

LOU. (*Throwing herself at his knees*.) Ah! papa, I ask your pardon. It is because my sister told me not to tell you; but I am going to tell you all.

ARG. First of all you must be whipped for having told a lie. Afterwards we shall see about the rest.

LOU. Pardon, papa.

ARG. No, no.

LOU. Dear papa, do not whip me.

ARG. You shall be whipped.

LOU. In Heaven's name, papa, do not whip me!

ARG. (*Wanting to whip her*). You shall, you shall.

LOU. Ah! papa, you have hurt me. Wait: I am dead.

(*She pretends to be dead.*)

ARG. Hullo! What is this? Louison, Louison! Ah! great Heaven! Louison! Ah! my daughter. Ah! unhappy being that I am! my dear daughter is dead! What have I done, wretch that I am! Ah! these cursed switches! The plague take the switches! Ah! my poor daughter, my poor little Louison!

LOU. There, there, papa do not cry so: I am not entirely dead.

ARG. Do you see the artful little girl! Well, I forgive you this time, provided you really tell me everything.

LOU. Oh! yes, papa.

ARG. You had better be careful in any case; for this little finger knows everything, and will tell me if you tell lies.

LOU. But, papa, do not tell sister that I have told you.

ARG. No, no.

LOU. (*After having made sure that no one is listening*). A man came into sister's room while I was there.

ARG. Well?

LOU. I asked him what he wanted, and he told me that he was her singing-master.

ARG. (*Aside*). Hem, hem! that is it. (*To Louison*). Well?

LOU. Sister came in afterwards.

ARG. Well?

LOU. She said to him: begone, begone, begone. Great Heavens, begone; you will drive me desperate.

ARG. Well?

LOU. And he, he would not go.

ARG. What did he say to her?

LOU. He said to her I do not know how many things.

ARG. And what more?

LOU. He said this, that, and the other, that he loved her dearly, and that she was the prettiest girl in the world.

ARG. And after that?

LOU. And after that, he fell down on his knees before her.

ARG. And after that?

LOU. And after that, he kissed her hands.

ARG. And after that?

LOU. And after that, stepmother came to the door, and he ran away.

ARG. There is nothing else?

LOU. No, papa.

ARG. My little finger, however, mutters something. (*Placing his finger to his ear*). Wait. Eh! ah! ah! Yes? oh! oh! Here is my little finger, which tells me of something that you have seen, but which you have not told me.

LOU. Ah! papa, your little finger is a story-teller.

ARG. Take care.

LOU. No, papa; do not believe it: it tells a story, I assure you.

ARG. Oh! very well, very well, we shall see. Go now, and take notice of everything: go. (*Alone*). Ah! there are no longer any children! Ah! what perplexity! I have not even so much leisure as to think about my illness. Really, I can hold out no longer. (*He drops into a chair*).

SCENE XII.—BÉRALDE, ARGAN.

BER. Well, brother! what is the matter? How do you do?

AR. Ah! brother, very poorly.

BER. How ! very poorly ?

AR. Yes ! I am in so weak a state, that it is incredible.

BER. That is sad.

AR. I have not even the strength to be able to speak.

BER. I came hither, brother, to propose to you a match for my niece Angélique.

AR. (*Speaking excitedly, and rising from his chair*). Brother, do not speak to me about this hussy. She is a wretch, an impertinent, impudent girl, whom I shall place in a convent before two days are over.

BER. Ah ! that is right ! I am very glad that your strength is coming back a little, and that my visit is doing you good. Well, we will talk of business by-and-by. I have brought you an entertainment with which I fell in, which will dissipate your chagrin, and make you better disposed for what we are to talk about. They are Gipsies dressed as Moors, who perform dances intermixed with songs, with which I am sure you will be pleased ; and this will be as good for you as a prescription of Mr. Purgon. Come.

SECOND INTERLUDE.

The brother of the Imaginary Invalid brings, to amuse him, several Gipsies of both sexes, dressed as Moors, who perform some dances intermixed with music.

1ST MOORISH WOMAN—

Sweet youth,
Take advantage of the spring
Of your best years ;
Take advantage of the spring
Of your best years ;
Abandon yourself to the tender passion.

Without the amorous flame,
The most charming pleasures
Have not sufficient powerful attractions
To satisfy the heart.

Sweet youth,
Take advantage of the spring
Of your best years ;
Abandon yourself to the tender passion.

Do not lose these precious moments,
Beauty vanishes,
Time effaces it ;
The age of coldness
Comes in its stead,
Which takes away our taste for these sweet
pastimes.

Take advantage of the spring
Of your best years,
Sweet youth ;
Take advantage of the spring
Of your best years ;
Abandon yourself to the tender passion.

First Entry of the Ballet.

Dance of the Gipsies.

2D MOORISH WOMAN—

What are you thinking of,
When you press us to love ?
Towards the tender passion
Our hearts, in our youth,
Have but too great an inclination.
Love has, to catch us,
Such sweet attractions,
That, from our own will, without waiting,
We would give ourselves up
To its first solicitations ;
But all that we hear
Of the poignant griefs
And the tears which it costs us,
Makes us fear
All its sweetness.

3D MOORISH WOMAN—

It is sweet, at our age,
 To love tenderly
 A lover
 Who is faithful :
 But, if he be fickle,
 Alas ! what torture !

4TH MOORISH WOMAN—

It is not the unhappiness
 At the lover who breaks his vows ;
 The pain
 And the rage
 Is that the fickle one
 Keeps possession of our heart.

2D MOORISH WOMAN—

What part are we to take,
 To defend our young hearts ?

3D MOORISH WOMAN—

Must we deny ourselves to it,
 And flee from its delights.

4TH MOORISH WOMAN—

Are we to surrender them,
 Notwithstanding their rigours ?

TOGETHER—

Yes, let us abandon ourselves to its ardours,
 Its transports, its whims,
 Its sweet languors,
 If it have some tortures,
 It has a thousand delights
 That charm the heart.

Second Entry of the Ballet.

All the Moors dance together, and make the apes, which they have brought with them perform some jumping.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—BÉRALDE, ARGAN, TOINETTE.

BER. Well! brother, what say you of this? Is it not better than a dose of cassia?

TOI. Humph! good cassia is good.

BER. Well! shall we talk a little together?

ARG. A little patience, brother: I shall be back directly.

TOI. Stay, Sir, you forget that you cannot walk without a stick.

ARG. You are right.

SCENE II.—BÉRALDE, TOINETTE.

TOI. Do not lose sight, if you please, of the interests of your niece.

BER. I shall try everything to obtain for her what she wishes.

TOI. We must absolutely prevent this extravagant match which he has taken into his head; and I have thought to myself that it would be a good thing to introduce into the place a doctor of our own choosing,³⁶ to disgust him with his Mr. Purgon, and to cry down his treatment of him. But as we have no one at hand to do this, I have made up my mind to play a trick of my own.

BER. How?

TOI. It is a whimsical idea. It may perhaps turn out more lucky than prudent. Let me manage. Act you on your side. There comes our man.

SCENE III.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE.

BER. You will allow me, brother, to ask you, before all things, not to excite yourself in our conversation.

ARG. Agreed.

BER. To reply without bitterness, to the things I may say to you.

ARG. Yes.

BER. And to argue together the matters which we have to discuss, with a mind free from all passion.

³⁶ In the original *un médecin à notre poste*.

ARG. Good Heavens! yes. What a deal of preamble.

BER. Whence comes it, brother, that having the property which you possess, and having no children but one daughter, for I do not reckon the little one; whence comes it, I say, that you talk of placing her in a convent?

ARG. Whence comes it brother, that I am master in my family, to do as I think best?

BER. Your wife does not fail to advise you to get rid, in that way, of your two daughters, and I have no doubt that, through a spirit of charity, she would be delighted to see them both good nuns.

ARG. There now! there we are. There is the poor woman at once brought up. It is she who does all the harm, and every one has a grudge against her.

BER. No, brother; let us leave her out of the question. She is a woman who has the best possible intentions towards your family, and who is devoid of all self-interest; who has a wonderful tenderness toward you, and who shows an inconceivable affection and kindness for your children: that is certain. Let us not speak of that, and let us go back to your daughter. What is the idea, brother, of wishing to make her marry the son of a doctor?

ARG. The idea is, of giving myself such a son-in-law as I want, brother.

BER. This is not your daughter's case, brother; and a more suitable match offers itself for her.

ARG. Yes; but this one, brother is more suitable to me.

BER. But must the husband she is to take, brother, be for her, or for you?

ARG. He must be both for her and for me, brother; and I wish to get into my family the people of whom I may be in need.

BER. For this reason, if your little girl were grown up, you would marry her to an apothecary.

ARG. Why not?

BER. Is it possible that you can always be wrapt up in your apothecaries and your doctors, and that you wish to be ill in spite of mankind and of nature?

ARG. How do you make that out, brother?

BER. I make it out, brother, that I see no man who is less ill than you, and that I wish for no better constitution

than your own. A great proof that you are in good health, and that you have a perfectly sound body is, that with all the pains you have taken, you have not been able to succeed as yet in spoiling the goodness of your constitution, and that you are not dead yet with all the physic which they have made you take.

ARG. But do you know, brother, that it is this which preserves me; and that Mr. Purgon says that I should succumb, if he were only three days without taking care of me?

BER. If you do not look to it, he will take so much care of you, that he shall send you into the next world.

ARG. But let us reason a little, brother. You do not believe then in physic?

BER. No, brother, and I do not see that it is necessary to salvation to believe in it.

ARG. What! you do not hold true a matter established throughout the world, and which all ages have revered.

BER. Far from holding it true, I consider it, between ourselves, one of the greatest follies of mankind; and to look philosophically at things, I do not see a more amusing mummery; I do not see anything more ridiculous than for one man to undertake to cure another.

ARG. Why cannot you admit, brother, that one man may be able to cure another?

BER. For this reason, brother, that the springs of our machine are a mystery, of which, up to the present, men can see nothing; and that nature has placed too thick a veil before our eyes for our knowing anything about it.

ARG. Then, in your opinion, doctors know nothing?

BER. True, brother, most of them have a deal of classical learning, know how to speak in good Latin, can name all the diseases in Greek, define and classify them; but as regards curing them, that is what they do not know at all.³⁷

ARG. But, nevertheless, you must agree that, on this head, doctors know more than other people.

BER. They know, brother, what I have told you, which

³⁷ Béralde's attack on the physicians should be compared with the thirty-seventh chapter of the Second Book of the *Essays* of Montaigne.

does not cure much; and the whole excellence of their art consists in a pompous gibberish, in a specious verbiage, which gives you words instead of reasons, and promises instead of effects.

ARG. But after all, brother, there are people as learned and as clever as you; and we find that, in case of illness, everyone has recourse to doctors.

BER. It is a sign of human weakness, and not of the truth of their art.

ARG. But doctors must believe in the truth of their art, inasmuch as they make use of it for themselves.

BER. That is because there are some among them who themselves share in the popular error by which they profit; and others who profit by it without sharing in it. Your Mr. Purgon, for instance, does not discriminate very clearly; he is a thorough physician from head to foot; a man who believes in his rules more than in all mathematical demonstrations, and who would think it a crime to wish to examine them; who sees nothing obscure in physic, nothing dubious, nothing difficult, and who, with an impetuosity of prejudice, a stiff-necked assurance, a coarse common sense and reasoning, rushes into purging and bleeding, and hesitates at nothing. You must not owe him a grudge for all he might do to you: he would despatch you with the most implicit faith; and he would, in killing you, only do what he has done to his wife and children, and what, if there were any need, he would do to himself.

ARG. That is because you bear him a grudge from infancy, brother.³⁸ But to cut it short, let us come to the fact. What must we do, then, when we are ill?

BER. Nothing, brother.

ARG. Nothing?

BER. Nothing. We must remain quiet. If we leave nature alone, she recovers gently from the disorder into which she has fallen. It is our anxiety, our impatience, which spoils all; and nearly all men die of their remedies, not of their diseases.

ARG. But you must admit, brother, that this nature may be assisted by certain things.

³⁸ The original has *vous avez, mon frère, une dent de lait contre lui; dent de lait* means literally, a first or shedding tooth.

BER. Good Heavens ! brother, these are mere ideas with which we love to beguile ourselves ; and, at all times, beautiful fictions have crept in amongst men, in which we believe, because they flatter us, and because it were to be wished that they were true. When a physician speaks to you of aiding, assisting, and supporting nature, to take away from her what is hurtful, and to give her that which she wants, to re-establish her, and to put her in the full possession of her functions ; when he speaks to you of rectifying the blood, of regulating the bowels and the brain, of relieving the spleen, of putting the chest to rights, of mending the liver, of strengthening the heart, of renewing and preserving the natural heat, and of being possessed of secrets to prolong life till an advanced age, he just tells you the romance of physic. But when you come to the truth and experience, you find nothing of all this ; and it is like those beautiful dreams, which, on awaking, leave you nothing but the regret of having believed in them.

ARG. Which means that all the knowledge of the world is contained in your head, and that you profess to know more about it than all the great physicians of our age.

BER. In speaking and in reality, your great physicians are two different sorts of persons. Hear them hold forth, they are the cleverest people in the world ; see them act, they are the most ignorant of all men.

ARG. Lack-a-day ! you are a great doctor ; and I should much like to have one of these gentlemen here, to refute your arguments, and to take you down a peg or two.

BER. I, brother, I do not assume the task of combating the Faculty ; and every one, at his own risk and cost, may believe whatever he pleases. What I say about it is simply between ourselves, and I should have wished to be somewhat able to dispel the error in which you are, and to take you, for your amusement, to see one of the comedies of Molière upon this subject.

ARG. Your Molière, with his comedies, is a fine impertinent fellow ! and I think it is like his impudence to go and bring upon the stage such worthy persons as the physicians.

BER. He does not make fun of physicians, but of the ridiculousness of physic.

ARG. It is like him to do so, to interfere about controlling the Faculty ! There is a fine booby, a brazen impertinent fellow, to make fun of consultations and prescriptions, to attack the body of physicians, and to put on his stage such venerable persons as these gentlemen !

BER. What would you have him put there but the various professions of men ? They put princes and kings there every day, who are of quite as good family as physicians.

ARG. Now, by all that is terrible !³⁹ if I were the physicians, I would avenge myself of his impertinence ; and would let him die without assistance, whenever he felt ill. He might say and do what he liked ; I would not prescribe even the least bleeding, or the smallest enema ; and I would say to him : die, die ; that will teach you another time to make fun of the Faculty.

BER. You are very angry with him ?

ARG. Yes. He is a foolish fellow ; and if the physicians be wise, they will do what I say.

BER. He will be wiser still than your physicians, for he will not ask them for their assistance.

ARG. So much the worse for him, if he have no recourse to remedies.

BER. He has his reasons for not wishing for them, and he maintains that it is permitted only to robust and vigorous people, who have sufficient strength left to bear the remedies with the disease ; but that, as for him, he has just strength enough to bear his illness.

ARG. Silly reasons these ! There, brother, let us talk no more about this man ; for he excites my bile, and you will bring on my illness again.

BER. Very well, brother ; and to change our conversation, I will tell you, that on account of a trifling repugnance on the part of your daughter, you should not take the violent resolution to place her in a convent ; that in the choice of a son-in-law, you should not blindly yield to a passion which carries you away ; and that, in such a matter, you should accommodate yourself somewhat to

³⁹ The original has *Par la mort non de diable*, used for *Par la mort de Dieu, non, de diable !*

the inclination of your child, seeing that it is for her life, and that on it depends the happiness of a union.

SCENE IV.—MR. FLEURANT, *carrying a syringe*; ARGAN, BÉRALDE.

ARG. Ah! by your leave, brother.

BER. What are you going to do?

ARG. Take this little enema: it will soon be done.

BER. You are jesting. Cannot you be a moment without an enema or some physic? Put it off till another time, and remain quiet a little.

ARG. It will be for to-night or for to-morrow morning, Mr. Fleurant.

MR. F. (*To Béralde*). With what do you meddle, to oppose the prescription of the Faculty, and to prevent this gentleman from taking my enema? It is very ridiculous of you to be so rash!

BER. Begone, Sir; we see well enough that you are not accustomed to speak to people's faces.

MR. F. One should not thus make fun of physic, and make me waste my time. I have come here only with a good prescription; and I shall go and tell Mr. Purgon how I have been prevented from executing his orders, and from performing my function. You shall see, you shall see . . .

SCENE V.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE.

ARG. You will be the cause of some mishap here, brother.

BER. A great mishap not to take an enema which Mr. Purgon has ordered! Once more, brother, is it possible that there is no way of curing you of that mania for physicians, and that you wish to be buried all the days of your life in their remedies?

ARG. Good Heavens! brother, you talk of it as a man who is in perfect health; but if you were in my place, you would soon change your language. It is easy to talk against physic, when one is in good health.

BER. But what illness have you?

ARG. You will drive me mad. I wish you had it, my

illness, just to see whether you would prate so much. Ah ! here comes Mr. Purgon.

SCENE VI.—MR. PURGON, ARGAN, BÉRALDE, TOINETTE.

MR. P. I have just heard some pretty news at the door ; that people are making jest of my prescriptions here, and refuse to take the remedies which I have prescribed.

ARG. Sir, it is not . . .

MR. P. This is a very rash proceeding, a strange revolt of a patient against his physician.

TOI. This is horrible,

MR. P. An enema which I had taken a pleasure in compounding myself.

ARG. It is not I . . .

MR. P. Invented and concocted according to all the rules of the art.

TOI. He is wrong.

MR. P. And which was to produce a marvellous effect on the bowels.

ARG. My brother . . .

MR. P. To send it back with contempt !

ARG. (*Pointing to Beralde*). It is he . . .

MR. P. It is a most daring deed.

TOI. That is true.

MR. P. An enormous outrage against the medical profession.

ARG. (*Pointing to Beralde*). He is the cause . . .

MR. P. A crime of high treason against the Faculty, which cannot be sufficiently punished.

TOI. You are right.

MR. P. I declare that I break off all connection with you.

ARG. It is my brother . . .

MR. P. That I no longer desire an alliance with you.

TOI. You will do well.

MR. P. And that to make an end of all union with you, there is the deed of gift which I made to my nephew, in favour of the marriage. (*He tears the document to pieces, and throws the pieces furiously about.*)

ARG. It is my brother who has done all the harm.

MR. P. To despise my enema !

ARG. Let it be brought ; I will take it.

MR. P. I would have cured you before long.

TOI. He does not deserve it.

MR. P. I was going to cleanse your body, and drive out all the bad humours.

ARG. Ah ! brother !

MR. P. And it wanted but a dozen more medicines to cure you completely.

TOI. He is unworthy of your care.

MR. P. But as you do not wish to be cured by my hands . . .

ARG. It is not my fault.

MR. P. Since you have withdrawn from the obedience which a man owes to his physician . . .

TOI. That cries for vengeance.

MR. P. Since you have declared yourself a rebel against the remedies which I prescribed for you . . .

ARG. Eh, not at all.

MR. P. I must tell you that I give you up to your bad constitution, to the intemperance of your bowels, to the corruption of your blood, to the acrimony of your bile, and to the feculence of your humours.

TOI. That is very well done.

ARG. Oh, Heavens !

MR. P. And I will that in four days you shall be in an incurable state.

ARG. Ah, mercy !

MR. P. That you fall into a bradypepsia.

ARG. Mr. Purgon !

MR. P. From bradypepsia into dyspepsia.

ARG. Mr. Purgon !

MR. P. From dyspepsia into apepsy.

ARG. Mr. Purgon !

MR. P. From apepsy into lientery.

ARG. Mr. Purgon !

MR. P. From lientery into dysentery.

ARG. Mr. Purgon !

MR. P. From dysentery into dropsy.

ARG. Mr. Purgon !

MR. P. And from dropsy into a privation of life, whither your folly will lead you.⁴⁰

SCENE VII.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE.

ARG. Ah, Heavens! I am dead. Brother, you have undone me.

BER. Why! what is the matter?

ARG. I can hold out no longer. I already feel the vengeance of the faculty.

BER. Really, brother, you are mad; and I would not have people see you act as you do, for a great deal. Just bear up a little, I pray; be yourself, and do not give way so much to your imagination.

ARG. You see, brother, the strange diseases with which he has threatened me.

BER. What a simpleton you are!

ARG. He says that I shall become incurable before four days are over.

BER. What does it signify what he says? Is it an oracle that has spoken? To hear you speak, it looks as if Mr. Purgon holds in his hands the thread of your life, and that by a supreme authority he lengthens or shortens it for you, as it pleases him. Remember that the springs of your existence are in yourself, and that the wrath of Mr. Purgon is as little capable of killing you as his remedies are of keeping you alive. Here is an opportunity, if you wish, to rid yourself of the physicians; or if you were born so as not to be able to do without them, it is easy to have another with whom, brother, you may run a little less risk.

ARG. Ah! brother, he knows my entire constitution, and the way how to treat me.

BER. I must confess to you that you are a man of great prejudice, and that you look at matters with strange eyes.

SCENE VIII.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE, TOINETTE.

TOI. (*To Argan*). Sir, here is a doctor who wishes to see you.

⁴⁰ *Braûypepsia* is a slow and imperfect digestion; *apepsy* is a defective digestion; *lientery* is a diarrhoea, in which the food is discharged only half digested.

ARG. And what doctor?

TOI. A doctor of the Faculty.

ARG. I ask you who he is.

TOI. I do not know him, but he is as like me as two drops of water; and if I were not sure that my mother was an honest woman, I should say that this was some little brother which she has given me since my father's death.

ARG. Let him come in.

SCENE IX.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE.

BER. You are served according to your wish. One physician leaves you; another presents himself.

ARG. I greatly fear that you may be the cause of some mishap.

BER. Again! You will always harp upon this.

ARG. But look you! All these diseases of which I know nothing weigh on my mind; these . . .

SCENE X.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE, TOINETTE, *disguised as a physician*.

TOI. Permit me to pay you this visit, Sir, and to offer you my small services for all the bleedings and purgings of which you may be in want.

ARG. Sir, I am much obliged to you. (*To Béralde*). Upon my word, this is Toinette himself.

TOI. Pray, excuse me, Sir; I have forgotten to give a message to my servant; I shall be back immediately.

SCENE XI.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE.

ARG. Eh? would you not swear that it was really Toinette?

BER. It is true that the likeness is very great indeed; but it is not the first time that we have seen this kind of things; and history is full of these freaks of nature.

ARG. As for me, I am amazed at it; and . . .

SCENE XII.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE, TOINETTE.⁴¹

TOI. What do you want, Sir?

⁴¹ "Toinette has doffed her physician's dress so soon that it is difficult to believe that she appeared as a doctor before." This note is in the edition of Molière's works of 1682.

ARG. How?

TOI. Did not you call me?

ARG. I? no.

TOI. My ears must have tingled then.

ARG. Just remain here a moment, to see how this physician resembles you.

TOI. (*Going out*). Yes, indeed! I have business elsewhere; and I have seen him enough.

SCENE XIII.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE.

ARG. If I had not seen them both, I should have believed it was but one.

BER. I have read of surprising instances of these kinds of likenesses; and we have seen some of them, in our own times, by which the whole world has been deceived.

ARG. As for me, I should have been deceived by this one; and I should have sworn that it was the same person.

SCENE XIV.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE; TOINETTE, *as a physician*.

TOI. Sir, I ask your pardon with all my heart.

ARG. (*Softly to Béralde*). This is wonderful.

TOI. You will not take amiss, pray, the curiosity which I had to see such an illustrious patient as you; and your reputation, which has spread everywhere, may excuse the liberty which I have taken.

ARG. I am your servant, Sir.

TOI. I perceive, Sir, that you are looking earnestly at me. How old do you really think I am?

ARG. I think that you may be six or seven and twenty at the most.

TOI. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! I am ninety.

ARG. Ninety!

TOI. Yes. You observe an effect of the secrets of my art, to keep myself so fresh and vigorous.

ARG. Upon my word, this is a fine youthful old man for ninety!

TOI. I am an itinerant physician who go from town to town, from province to province, from kingdom to kingdom, in search of illustrious materials for my art, to find patients worthy of my attention, capable of having

applied to them the grand and beautiful secrets which I have discovered in medicine. I disdain to amuse myself with these small fry of ordinary complaints, with trifling rheumatisms and colds, small agues, vapours, and headaches. I want diseases of importance, real non-intermittent fevers, with a disordered brain, real purple fevers, real plagues, real confirmed dropsies, real pleurisies with inflammations of the lungs ; these are what please me ; that is where I triumph ; and I wish, Sir, that you had been given up by all the physicians, despaired of, at the point of death, that I might show you the excellence of my remedies, and the desire which I have to be of service to you.

ARG. I am obliged to you, Sir, for the kindness you have for me.

TOI. Let me feel your pulse. Come, beat as you should. Ah ! I shall make you go as you ought. Ho ! this pulse plays the impertinent ; I perceive well enough that you do not know me as yet. Who is your physician ?

ARG. Mr. Purgon.

TOI. This man is not in my note-book amongst the great physicians. From what does he say that you suffer ?

ARG. He says it is from the liver, and others say it is from the spleen.

TOI. They are all blockheads. It is from the lungs that you are ill.

ARG. From the lungs ?

TOI. Yes. What do you feel ?

ARG. I feel from time to time qualms.

TOI. Exactly, the lungs.

ARG. I seem to have a mist before my eyes sometimes.

TOI. The lungs.

ARG. I have now and then a pain at the heart.

TOI. The lungs.

ARG. I feel a weariness in my limbs at times.

TOI. The lungs.

ARG. And now and then I am taken with pains in the stomach, just as if it were the colics.

TOI. The lungs. Do you relish your food ?

ARG. Yes, Sir.

TOI. The lungs. You like to take a little wine?

ARG. Yes, Sir.

TOI. The lungs. You feel an inclination to take a little nap after your meals, and you are glad to go to sleep?

ARG. Yes, Sir.

TOI. The lungs, the lungs; I tell you. What does the doctor order you to eat?

ARG. He orders me soup.

TOI. The ignorant fellow!

ARG. Poultry.

TOI. The ignorant fellow!

ARG. Veal.

TOI. The ignorant fellow!

ARG. Broth.

TOI. The ignorant fellow!

ARG. New-laid eggs.

TOI. The ignorant fellow!

ARG. And in the evening some prunes to loosen the belly.

TOI. The ignorant fellow!

ARG. And above all, to take my wine well diluted.

TOI. *Ignorantus, ignoranta, ignorantum.* You must drink your wine pure, and, to thicken your blood, which is too thin, you must eat good solid beef, good solid pork, good Dutch cheese; groats and rice, and chestnuts and thin cakes, to thicken and conglutinate. Your doctor is an ass. I shall send you one of my choice; and I shall come to see you from time to time, while I am in this town.

ARG. You will oblige me very much.

TOI. What the deuce do you want with this arm?

ARG. How?

TOI. I would have this arm cut off instanter if I were you.

ARG. And why?

TOI. Do you not see that it attracts to itself all the nourishment, and that it prevents this side from growing.

ARG. Yes; but I want my arm.

TOI. You have a right eye there, too, which I would have taken out, if I were in your place.

ARG. An eye taken out?

TOI. Do you not see that it incommodes the other, and robs it of its nourishment? Believe me, have it taken out as quickly as possible; you will see all the clearer with the left eye.

ARG. There is no hurry.

TOI. Farewell. I am sorry to leave you so soon; but I must be present at a great consultation which is to be held about a man who died yesterday.

ARG. About a man who died yesterday?

TOI. Yes: to consider and see what ought to have been done to cure him. Until we meet again.

ARG. You know that invalids are excused from seeing any one to the door.

SCENE XV.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE.

BER. This physician really seems very clever.

ARG. Yes; but he does things a little too quickly.

BER. All great physicians are like that.

ARG. To cut off an arm, to take out an eye, so that the other may be better! I much prefer that the other should not be quite so well. A fine operation, to make me one-eyed and one-armed.

SCENE XVI.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE, TOINETTE.

TOI. (*Pretending to speak to some one outside*). Come, come, I am your humble servant, I am in no mood to be merry.

ARG. What is the matter?

TOI. Your physician, troth who wished to feel my pulse.

ARG. Look at that, at the age of ninety.

BER. Well now! brother, since your Mr. Purgon has fallen out with you, will you not give me leave to speak to you about the match which is proposed for my niece.

ARG. No, brother: I mean to place her in a convent, for having run counter to my wishes. I perceive well enough that there is some love-affair in the case; and I discovered a certain secret interview which they do not know that I have discovered.

BER. Well! brother; and suppose there is some slight

inclination, would that be so very criminal? And can there be aught in it to offend you, when all this aims only at what is honourable, marriage.

ARG. Be that as it may, brother, she shall be a nun; that is a settled thing.

BER. You wish to please some one.

ARG. I understand you. You always come back to that, and you dislike my wife.

BER. Well then! yes, brother: since I am to speak frankly to you, it is your wife I am alluding to; and I can no more bear your infatuation for physic, than your infatuation for her and see you running headlong into all the snares which she spreads for you.

TOI. Ah! Sir, do not talk about my mistress; she is a woman of whom nothing can be said, a woman without any guile, and who loves my master, who loves him . . . One cannot express it.

ARG. Just ask her how she caresses me.

TOI. That is true.

ARG. What uneasiness my illness causes her.

TOI. Assuredly.

ARG. And the care and the pains she takes about me.

TOI. To be sure. (*To Béralde*). Do you wish me to convince you, and to show you immediately how my mistress loves master? (*To Argan*). Allow me to show him his blunder, Sir, and to convince him of his error.⁴²

ARG. How?

TOI. The mistress is coming back. Put yourself at full length in this chair, and pretend that you are dead. You shall see the grief she shall be in, when I tell her the news.

ARG. I will do it.

TOI. Yes; but do not leave her long in despair; for she might die of it.

ARG. Leave it to me.

TOI. (*To Béralde*). And you, hide yourself in this corner.

SCENE XVII.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE.

ARG. Is there not some danger in counterfeiting death?

⁴² The original has *souffrez que je lui montre son bec-jaune*. See Vol. II., *Don Juan*, page 101, note II.

TOI. No, no. What danger should there be? Only stretch yourself out there. (*Softly*). It will be a pleasure to confound your brother. Here comes the mistress. Steady as you are.

SCENE XVIII.—BÉLINE, ARGAN, *stretched out in his chair*;
TOINETTE.

TOI. (*Pretending not to see Béline*). Ah! good Heavens! Ah! what a misfortune! What a strange accident!

BEL. What ails you, Toinette?

TOI. Ah! mistress!

BEL. What is the matter?

TOI. Your husband is dead.

BEL. My husband is dead?

TOI. Alas! yes! the poor man is gone.

BEL. Are you sure?

TOI. I am sure. No one knows the accident as yet; and I was here all alone. He just now passed away in my arms. Look, there he is at full length in his chair.

BEL. Heaven be praised for it! I have got rid of a great burden. How silly you are, Toinette, to make yourself miserable about this death!

TOI. I thought, mistress, that I ought to cry.

BEL. Come, come, it is not worth while. What do we lose in him; and what good was he upon the earth? A man who was a trouble to everybody, dirty, disgusting, never without some enema or physic in him, always blowing his nose, coughing or spitting; without sense, tiresome, bad-tempered, for ever fatiguing people, and scolding night and day the maids and the servants.

TOI. This is a pretty funeral oration!

BEL. You must help me, Toinette, to execute my plan; and you may depend upon it that, in helping me, your reward shall be sure. Since, by good fortune, no one has as yet been told of the affair, let us carry him to his bed, and keep his death secret, until I have managed my business. There are some papers, there is some money which I wish to get hold of; and it would not be just that I should have fruitlessly wasted the prime of my years with him. Come, Toinette; let us first of all take his keys.

ARG. (*Suddenly getting up*). Gently.

BEL. Oh !

ARG. Aha ! my lady, that is how you love me !

TOI. Ah ! Ah ! the dead man is not dead.

ARG. (*To Béline, who is going*). I am very glad to see your good feeling, and to have heard the fine panegyric which you have pronounced on me. This is a wholesome advice which will make me more prudent for the future, and which will prevent me from doing many things.⁴³

SCENE XIX.—BÉRALDE, *coming out of the corner where he has been hidden*; ARGAN, TOINETTE.

BER. Well, brother, you see now ?

TOI. Upon my word, I should never have believed this. But I hear your daughter. Place yourself again as you were, and let us see in what manner she will take your death. It is not a bad thing to find out ; and, while you are about it, you shall know, by these means, the feelings of your family for you.

(*Béralde goes into hiding again.*)

SCENE XX.—ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, TOINETTE.

TOI. (*Pretending not to see Angélique*). Oh, Heaven ! Ah, sad event ! Unhappy day !

AN. What ails you Toinette ? and why do you cry ?

TOI. Alas ! I have sad news to tell you.

AN. Eh ! what ?

TOI. Your father is dead.

AN. My father is dead, Toinette ?

TOI. Yes. There he is. He has just died of a fainting fit that took him.

AN. Oh, Heaven ! what a misfortune ! what a cruel blow ! Alas ! am I to lose my father, the only thing I had left in the world ; and, still more, to complete my unhappiness, must I lose him in a moment when he was angry with me ! What is to become of me, unhappy being ? and what consolation shall I find after so great a loss ?

⁴³ The primary idea of the character of Béline is to be found in a farce, played before Molière came to Paris, and called *The Sick Husband* ;—wherein a wife rejoices, with her lover, on hearing of the death of her spouse.

SCENE XXI.—ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, CLÉANTE, TOINETTE.

CLE. What is the matter, fair Angelique? and what misfortune are you bewailing?

AN. Alas! I am bewailing all that I could lose of what is most dear and precious in life; I am bewailing the death of my father.

CLE. Oh, Heavens! what an accident! what an unforeseen blow. Alas! after the request for your hand which I besought your uncle to make for me, I came to introduce myself to him, and to try, by my respects and entreaties, to dispose his heart to grant you to my love.

AN. Ah! Cléante! let us no longer talk of anything; let us leave all thoughts of marriage. After the loss of my father, I will no longer belong to this world, and I renounce it forever. Yes, father, if I have just now opposed your inclinations, I shall at least carry out one of your intentions, and make amends, by that, for the grief which I accuse myself of having caused you. (*Throwing herself at his feet*). Suffer me, father, now to pledge you my word, and to embrace you, to show you my repentance.

ARG. (*Embracing Angélique*). Ah! daughter.

AN. Oh!

ARG. Come. Have no fear; I am not dead. There, you are my own flesh and blood, my own dear daughter; and I am delighted to have seen your good feeling.

SCENE XXII.—ARGAN, TOINETTE, ANGÉLIQUE, CLÉANTE, BÉRALDE.

AN. Ah! what an agreeable surprise! Father, since, by an extreme good fortune, Heaven has given you back to my love, suffer me to throw myself at your feet to beseech you for one thing. If you are not favourable to the inclination of my heart; if you refuse me Cléante for a husband, I implore you, at least, not to force me to marry another. This is all the favour I ask of you.

CLE. (*Throwing himself at Argan's feet*). Oh! Sir, allow yourself to be touched by her prayers and mine; and do not show yourself opposed to the mutual ardour of such a fine affection.

BER. Can you still hold out, brother?

TOI. Can you be insensible to so much love, Sir?

ARG. Let him become a doctor, and I consent to the marriage. (*To Cléante*). Yes, become a physician, and I give you my daughter.

CLE. With all my heart, Sir. If it depends but upon this to be your son-in-law, I shall become a doctor, an apothecary even, if you wish it. It is not much to do, and I would consent to many other things to obtain the fair Angélique.

BER. But, brother, a thought comes into my head. Become a physician yourself. The convenience will be still greater of having within yourself all that you need.

TOI. That is true. That is the proper way of getting quickly cured; and there is no complaint so daring as to meddle with the person of a physician.

ARG. I think that you are jesting with me, brother. Am I of an age to study?

BER. To study! that is good. You are learned enough; and there are many among them, who are not more clever than you are.

ARG. But one should know to speak Latin well, understand the diseases, and the remedies to apply.

BER. In receiving the gown and the cap of a physician, you will learn all that; and you will afterwards be more skilful than you like to be.

ARG. What! do people know how to discourse upon diseases when they have on that gown?

BER. Yes. You have but to speak with a gown and a cap, and any gibberish becomes learned, and all nonsense becomes sense.

TOI. There, Sir, if it was only for your beard, that goes a great way already; for the beard makes more than half of the physician.

CLE. In any case, I am ready to do everything.

BER. Will you have the thing done immediately?

ARG. How, immediately?

BER. Yes, and in your own house.

ARG. In my own house?

BER. Yes. I know a body of physicians, friends of mine, who will come instantly and perform the ceremony in your hall. It will cost you nothing.

ARG. But I, what am I to say? what to answer?

BER. You will be instructed in two words, and they will give you in writing what you are to say. Go and put on a decent dress. I shall go and fetch them.

ARG. Well, let us see all this.

SCENE XXIII.—BÉRALDE, ANGÉLIQUE, CLÉANTE,
TOINETTE.

CLE. What do you mean? and what do you understand by these physician friends of yours?

TOI. What is your plan, then?

BER. To amuse ourselves a little this evening. The comedians have composed a slight interlude about the installation of a physician with music and dances. I wish that we should enjoy the entertainment together, and that my brother should play the principal personage in it.

AN. But, uncle, I think that you are jesting a little too much with my father.

BER. But, niece, it is rather accommodating ourselves to his whims than jesting with him. All this is only between ourselves. We can each of us take a part in it ourselves, and thus perform the comedy for one another. The carnival authorizes all this. Come, let us quickly go and get everything ready.

CLE. (*To Angélique*). Do you consent?

AN. Yes, since my uncle manages the affair.

THIRD INTERLUDE.

A Burlesque Ceremony of admitting a Doctor of Medicine in recitative Music and Dancing.

Several upholsterers enter to prepare the hall, and place the benches to music. After which the whole assembly, composed of eight syringe-bearers, six apothecaries, twenty-two doctors, and the person that is to be admitted physician, eight surgeons dancing, and two singing, enter, and take their places, each according to his rank.

PRAESES. Savantissimi Doctores,⁴⁴
 Medicinæ Professores,
 Qui hic assemblati estis ;
 Et vos, altri messiores,
 Sententiarum Facultatis
 Fideles executores ;
 Chirurgiani et apothecari,
 Atque tota compania aussi,
 Salus, honor, et argentum,
 Atque bonum appetitum.

Non possum, docti confreri
 En moi satis admirari,
 Qualis bona inventio,
 Est medici professio ;
 Quam bella chosa est et benè trovata,
 Medicina illa benedicta,
 Quæ, suo nomine solo,
 Surprenanti miraculo,
 Depuis si longo tempore,
 Facit à gogo vivere
 Tant de gens omni genere.

Per totam terrum videmus
 Grandam vogam ubi sumus ;
 Et quods grandes et petiti
 Sunt de nobis infatuti.
 Totus mundus, currens ad nostros remedios,
 Nos regardat sicut deos,
 Et nostris ordonnanciis
 Principes et Reges soumissos videtis.

Doncque il est nostræ sapientiæ,
 Boni sensus atque prudentiæ,
 De fortement travailler
 A nos bene conservare
 In tali credito, voga et honore ;

⁴⁴ In this interlude there is such an amount of Latin, dog-Latin, Italian, French, and of words belonging to no language under the sun, that, by rendering any of it into English, the effect of the whole is greatly marred. I have, therefore, left it in the original.

Et prendere gardam à non recevoir
 In nostro docto corpore,
 Quam personas capabiles,
 Et totas dignas remplire
 Has plaças honorabiles.
 C'est pour cela que nunc convocatis estis;
 Et credo quod trovabitis
 Dignam materiam medici
 In savanti homine que voici;
 Lequel, in chosis omnibus;
 Dono ad interrogandum,
 Et à fond examinandum
 Vostris capacitatibus.

PRIMUS DOCTOR.

Si mihi licentiam dat dominus praeses,
 Et tanti docti doctores,
 Et assistantes illustres,
 Très-savanti bacheliero,
 Quem estimo honoro,
 Domandabo causam et rationem quare
 Opium facit dormire.

BACHELIERUS.

Mihi à docto doctore.
 Domandatur causam et rationem quare
 Opium facit dormire.
 A quoi respondeo;
 Quia est in eo
 Virtus dormitiva,
 Cujus est natura
 Sensus assoupire.⁴⁵

CHORUS. Bene, bene, bene respondere.
 Dignus, dignus est intrare
 In nostro docto corpore.
 Bene, bene respondere.

⁴⁵In Descartes' time, and before him, everything was explained by forms, virtues, entities, quiddities. A thing was cold because it had a frigorific virtue; hot because it had a calorific virtue.

SECUNDUS DOCTOR.

Cum permissione domini præsidis
Doctissimæ Facultatis,
Et totius his nostris actis
Companiæ assistantis,
Domandabo tibi, docte bacheliere.
Quæ sunt remedia
Quæ, in maladia
Dite hydropisia
Convenit facere?

BACHELIERUS.

Clysterium donare,
Postea seignare,
Ensuita purgare.

CHORUS. Bene, bene, bene, bene respondere.
Dignus, dignus, est intrare
In nostros docto corpore.

TERTIUS DOCTOR.

Si bonum semblatur domino præsidi,
Doctissimæ Facultati,
Et companiæ præsenti,
Domandabo tibi, docte bacheliere,
Quæ remedia eticis,
Pulmonicis atque asmaticis
Trovas à propos facere.

BACHELIERUS.

Clysterium donare,
Postea seignare,
Ensuita purgare.

CHORUS. Bene, bene, bene respondere.
Dignus, dignus est intrare
In nostro docto corpore.

QUARTUS DOCTOR.

Super illas maladias,
Doctus bachelierus dixit maravillas;
Mais, si non ennuyo dominum præsidem,
Doctissimam Facultatem,
Et totam honorabilem
Companiam ecoutantem;

Faciam illi unam questionem.
 Dès hiero maladus unus
 Tombavit in meas manus ;
 Habet grandam fievram cum redoublamentis,
 Grandam dolorem capitis,
 Et grandum malum au côté.
 Cum granda difficultate
 Et pena de respirare.
 Veillas mihi dire,
 Docte bacheliere
 Quid illi facere.

BACHELIERUS.

Clysterium donare,
 Postea seignare,
 Ensuita purgare.

QUINTUS DOCTOR.

Mais, si maladia
 Opiniatria
 Non vult se garire,
 Quid illi facere ?

BACHELIERUS. Clysterium donare
 Postea seignare,
 Ensuita purgare.

Reseignare, repurgare, et reclysterisare.

CHORUS. Bene, bene, bene, bene respondere :
 Dignus, dignus est intrare
 In nostro docto corpore.

PRAESES. Juras gardare statuta
 Per Facultatem præscripta,
 Cum sensu et jugeamento ?

BACHELIERUS. Juro.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ It is said that Molière felt so ill on pronouncing these words, at the fourth representation of *The Imaginary Invalid*, that he could not get on any longer, and the curtain was obliged to fall.

PRAESES. Essere in omnibus
 Consultationibus,
 Ancieni aviso,
 Aut bono,
 Aut mauvaiso?

BACHELIERUS. Juro.

PRAESES. De non jamais te servire
 De remediis aucunis,
 Quam de ceux seulement doctæ Facultatis,
 Maladus dût-il crevare
 Et mori de suo malo?

BACHELIERUS. Juro.

PRAESES. Ego, cum isto boneto
 Venerabili et docto,
 Dono tibi et concedo
 Virtutem et puissanciam
 Medicandi,
 Purgandi,
 Seignandi,
 Percandî,
 Taillandi,
 Coupandi,
 Et occidendi
 Impune per totam terram.

Entry of the Ballet.

*All the Surgeons and Apothecaries come to do him reverence
 to Music.*

BACH. Grandes doctores doctrinæ
 De la rhubarbe et du séné,
 Ce serait sans douta à moi chosa folla,
 Inepta et ridicula,
 Si j'alloibam m' engageare
 Vobis louangeas donare,
 Et entrepreñoibam adjoutare
 Des lumieras au soleillo,
 Et des etoilas au cielo,
 Des ondas á l' Oceano;
 Et des rosas au printano.

Agreate qu' avec uno moto
 Pro toto remercimento
 Rendam gratias corpori tam docto.
 Vobis, vobis debeo
 Bien plus qu' à naturæ et qu' à patri meo.
 Natura et pater meus
 Hominem me habent factum ;
 Mais vos me, ce qui est bien plus,
 Avetis factum medicum :
 Honor, favor et gratia,
 Qui, in hoc corde que voilà,
 Imprimant ressentimenta
 Qui dureront in secula.

CHORUS. Vivat, vivat, vivat, vivat, cent fois vivat
 Novus doctor, qui tam bene parlat !
 Mille, mille annis, et manget et bibat,
 Et seignet et tuat !

Third Entry of the Ballet.

All the Surgeons and Apothecaries dance to the sound of the Instruments and Voices, and clapping of hands, and Apothecaries' Mortars.

Chirurgus. Puisse-t-il voir doctas
 Suas ordonnancias,
 Omnium chirurgorum,
 Et apothicarum
 Remplire boutiquas !

Chorus. Vivat, vivat, vivat, vivat, cent fois vivat,
 Novus doctor, qui, tam bene parlat
 Mille, mille annis, et manget et bibat,
 Et seignet et tuat !

Chirurgus. Puissent toti anni
 Lui essere boni
 Et favorabiles,
 Et n' habere jamais
 Quam pestas, verolas,
 Fievras, pleuresias
 Fluxus de sang et dyssenterias !

Chorus. Vivat, vivat, vivat, vivat, cent fois vivat,
Novus doctor, qui tam bene parlat !
Mille, mille annis, et magnet et bibat,
Et seignet et tuat !

*The Doctors, Surgeons and Apothecaries go out all according
to their several ranks, with the same ceremony as they
entered.*⁴⁷

⁴⁷ There exists also an addition to the ceremony, namely, speeches of three other doctors, and some variations in those of the physicians who have spoken, as well as in other parts of the ceremony. But as these changes are found only in the editions of Rouen and Amsterdam, and are most probably not by Molière, we do not give them here.

LA JALOUSIE DU BARBOUILLÉ.

COMÉDIE.

THE JEALOUSY OF LE BARBOUILLÉ.

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT.

(THE ORIGINAL IN PROSE.)

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

The Jealousy of le Barbouillé is probably an imitation of one of the Italian *commedia del 'arte*, and was composed when Molière was traveling in the provinces, when he sketched or wrote a certain number of comediettas, or rather farces, to amuse his country audiences.¹ It is impossible to say when they were first performed, though a few were acted even after Molière's return to Paris.

The manuscript of *The Jealousy of le Barbouillé*, and of the following farce, *The Flying Doctor*, was, in 1731, in the hands of Jean Baptiste Rousseau, who lived then at Brussels. They were first published in 1819, and have since that time been generally added to the other dramatic works of Molière. The subject of *The Jealousy of le Barbouillé* appears to be taken from one of Boccaccio's tales,² which was afterwards developed in *George Dandin*.

¹ The titles of some of these farces are to be found in the Prefatory Memoir of Molière, Vol. I., page xxv.

² See Introductory Notice to *George Dandin*, Vol. II., page 517.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LE BARBOUILLÉ,³ *Angélique's husband.*

THE DOCTOR.

VALÈRE, *Angélique's lover.*

GORGIBUS, *Angélique's father.*

VIHLEBREQUIN.

LA VALLÉE.

ANGÉLIQUE.

CATHAU, *her maid.*

³ Le Barbouillé means the besmeared, because probably in former times the actor who played this part rubbed his face with flour.

THE JEALOUSY OF LE BARBOUILLÉ.

(*LA JALOUSIE DU BARBOUILLÉ.*)

SCENE I.—LE BARBOUILLÉ, *alone.*

It must be admitted that I am the most unfortunate of all men! I have a wife who drives me mad: instead of relieving me and doing things as I like, she makes me wish myself at the devil twenty times a day; instead of staying at home, she likes to go walking about, loves good cheer, and keeps company with I do not know what kind of people. Ah! poor Barbouillé, how wretched you are! She must, however, be punished. Suppose I killed her . . . that idea is worth nothing, for you should be hanged. If you had her put in prison . . . the slut would find a way out of it with her master-key. What the deuce am I to do then? But here is the doctor coming. I must ask him for a bit of advice as to what I am to do.

SCENE II.—THE DOCTOR, LE BARBOUILLÉ.

BAR. I was coming after you to make a request of you upon a matter of importance to me.

DOC. You must be very badly brought up, very clumsily, and have been reprimanded very insufficiently, friend, to accost me without lifting your hat, without observing *rationem loci, temporis et personæ*. What! to begin with

an ill-arranged discourse, instead of saying: *Salve, vel Salvus sis, Doctor, doctorum eruditissime*. Eh! for whom do you take me, friend?

BAR. Upon my word, I nope you will excuse me, my mind was embarrassed,⁴ and I was not paying any attention to what I was doing; but I know full well that you are a gallant gentleman.

DOC. Know you at all whence comes the word "gallant gentleman?"

BAR. Let it come from Villejuif or Aubervilliers, I care little.

DOC. Know that the word gallant gentleman comes from "elegant;" taking the *g* and the *a* of the last syllable, that makes *ga*, then taking *ll*, adding an *a* and the last two letters, that makes *gallant*, and then adding *gentleman*, that makes *gallant gentleman*. But, once more, for whom do you take me?

BAR. I take you for a doctor. But let us talk a little of the affair which I wish to propose to you. You must know then . . .

DOC. Know beforehand that I am not only once a doctor, but that I am a doctor once, twice, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten times. 1st. Because the unit being the basis, the foundation, and the first of all numbers, I am consequently the first of all doctors, the learned of the learned. 2d. Because two faculties are necessary for the perfect knowledge of all things, the senses and the understanding; and, as I am all sense and understanding, I am twice doctor.

BAR. Agreed. It is . . .

DOC. 3d. Because the number of three is that of perfection, according to Aristotle; and, as I am perfect, and all my productions likewise, I am three times doctor.

BAR. Well, Mr. Doctor . . .

DOC. 4TH. Because philosophy has four parts: logic, morality, physics, and metaphysics; and, as I possess them all four, and am perfectly versed in them, I am four times doctor.

⁴ The original has, *j'avais l'esprit en écharpe*, I had my mind in a scarf, therefore "awry," "embarrassed."

BAR. What the deuce! I do not doubt it. Do listen to me then.

DOC. 5TH. Because there are five universals; the genus, the spices, the difference, the essence, and the accident, without the knowledge of which it becomes impossible to reason well; and, as I employ them with advantage, and know their usefulness, I am five times doctor.

BAR. I must have a deal of patience.

DOC. 6TH. Because the number six is the number of labour; and, as I labour incessantly for my glory, I am six times doctor.

BAR. Ho! speak as much as you like.

DOC. 7TH. Because the number of seven is the number of felicity; and, as I possess a perfect knowledge of everything that can confer happiness, and as I am so indeed by my talents, I feel obliged to say of myself; *O ter quaterque beatum!* 8th. Because the number of eight is the number of justice by reason of the equality found in it, and because the justice and prudence with which I measure and weigh all my actions make me eight times doctor. 9th. Because there are nine Muses, and because I am equally beloved by them. 10th. Because, as we cannot pass the number of ten without making a repetition of the other numbers, and because it is the universal number; so, so, when they have found me they have found the universal doctor; I contain in my own self all the other doctors. Thus, you perceive by plausible, true, demonstrative, and convincing arguments, that I am once, twice, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten times doctor.

BAR. What the deuce is this? I expected to find a very learned man, who would give me good advice, and I find a chimney-sweep, who, instead of talking to me, amuses himself by playing Morra⁵ with me. One, two, three, four; ha, ha, ha! But that is not at all the thing; I pray you to listen to me, and to think that I am not the man to

⁵ Morra is an Italian game, which consists in holding up quickly some fingers of the hand raised and some shut, and for the opposite player to guess the precise number of the fingers thus held up. As the Doctor in counting probably held up his fingers, Le Barbouillé evidently alludes to the Morra.

make you waste your time, and that, if you satisfy me in what I wish of you, I will give you anything you like; money if you wish it.

DOC. Money, say you?

BAR. Yes, money, and anything else you might like to ask.

DOC. (*Hitching up his gown behind him*). Then you take me to be a man who would do anything for money, a man bound to self-interest, a mercenary soul? Know, friend, that, if you were to give me a purse full of pistoles, if this purse were in a costly box, this box in a precious case, this case in a wondrous casket, this casket in a curious cabinet, this cabinet in a magnificent room, this room in an agreeable apartment, this apartment in a splendid castle, this castle in a matchless citadel, this citadel in a famous town, this town in a fruitful island, this island in an opulent province, this province in a flourishing kingdom, this kingdom stretching over the whole world; and that you would give me this world in which should be this flourishing kingdom, in which should be this opulent province, in which should be this fruitful island, in which should be this famous town, in which should be this matchless citadel, in which should be this splendid castle, in which should be this agreeable apartment, in which should be this curious cabinet, in which should be this wondrous casket, in which should be this precious case, in which should be this costly box, and in which should be enclosed this purse full of pistoles, I should care as little about your money and about yourself as about that.

(*He departs.*)

BAR. Upon my word! I have made a mistake; I thought it well to speak to him of money, because he was dressed as a physician; but as he does not want it, nothing is easier than to satisfy him: I will run after him.

(*He goes off.*)

SCENE III.—ANGÉLIQUE, VALÈRE, CATHAU.

AN. I assure you, Sir, that you will oblige me greatly by keeping me company now and then; my husband is so ill-shaped, so debauched, such a drunkard, that it is

torture to me to be with him, and I leave you to guess what pleasure one can derive from a clodhopper like him.

VAL. Madam,⁶ you do me too much honour in bearing with me. I promise you to contribute everything in my power for your entertainment; and, since you confess that my society is not disagreeable to you, I shall show you by my attentions how much pleased I am at the news which you tell me.

CA. Ah! change your conversation; here comes kill-joy.⁷

SCENE IV.—LE BARBOUILLÉ, VALÈRE, ANGÉLIQUE, CATHAU.

VAL. I am in despair, Madam, at having to bring you such grievous tidings; but you might have learned them from some one else; and, as your brother is very ill . . .

AN. Sir, do not tell me ~~any~~ more; I am your servant, and feel obliged to you for ~~the~~ trouble you have taken.

BAR. Upon my word, ~~here~~ is the certificate of my cuckoldom, without going ~~to~~ the notary for it. Ha! ha! mistress slut, I find you with a man, after all my orders to the contrary, and you wish to send me from Gemini to Capricorn!⁸

AN. Well! need you grumble about that? This gentleman has come to tell me that my brother is very ill: what is there to complain?

CA. Ah! here it is; I was wondering that we should be quiet so long.

BAR. Upon my word, you are spoiling one another, you sluts; you Cathau, you are corrupting my wife: since you have been in her service, she is not worth half of what she was before.

CA. Indeed yes, a pretty story that!

AN. Leave the sot alone; do you not see that he is so drunk that he does not know what he is saying.

⁶ The original has *Mademoiselle*, see Prefatory Notice, Vol. I., page 32, note 14.

⁷ The original has *porte-guignon*, bearer of ill-luck.

⁸ See Rabelais' *Pantagruel*, book iii. ch. xxv. "How Panurge consulteth with Herr Trippa."

SCENE V.—GORGIBUS, VILLEBREQUIN, ANGÉLIQUE,
CATHAU, LE BARBOUILLÉ.

GOR. Here is my cursed son-in-law quarrelling with my daughter again!

VIL. Find out what it is.

GOR. What! always squabbling! Will you never have any peace among you?

BAR. This wretch calls me sot. (*To Angélique*). Hold, I have got a good mind to slap your face⁹ in the presence of your relatives.

GOR. Cursed be the purse, if you have done what he reproaches you with.¹⁰

AN. But it is he who always begins to . . .

CA. Cursed be the hour in which you chose this cur-mudgeon!

VIL. Come, hold your tongue; peace!

SCENE VI.—GORGIBUS, VILLEBREQUIN, ANGÉLIQUE,
CATHAU, LE BARBOUILLÉ, THE DOCTOR.

DOC. What is this? What disorder! what quarrelling! what wrangling! what noise! what confusion! what falling out! what a flare-up! What is the matter, gentlemen, what is the matter? what is the matter? Come, come, let us see if there is no way of making you agree; let me be your peacemaker; let me bring union among you.

GOR. It is my daughter and my son-in-law who have some quarrel between them.

DOC. And what is it? Just tell me the cause of their difference.

GOR. Sir . . .

DOC. But in few words.

GOR. Yes: but put on your bonnet.

DOC. Do you know whence comes the word "bonnet"?

GOR. No, indeed.

⁹ The original has *je suis bien tenté de te bailler une quinte major*, I am much tempted to give you a high sequence of five. The expression *quinte major*, now called *quinte majeure*, belongs to the game of piquet, for which see Vol. I. *The Impertinents*, Act ii., Scene 2.

¹⁰ The original has *Je dédonne au diable l'escarcelle si vous l'aviez fait*. This phrase is very obscure; I have followed the explanation given by the late Mr. E. Despois.

DOC. It comes from *bonum est*, good is, that is good, because it keeps you from catarrhs and colds.

GOR. Upon my word, I did not know that.

DOC. But just tell me quickly about this quarrel.

GOR. This is what happened . . .

DOC. I do not think that you are the man to detain me long, especially as I request you not to do so. I have some pressing business which calls me into town; but, to restore peace in your family, I do not mind stopping for a moment.

GOR. I shall have done in a moment.

DOC. Be quick then.

GOR. Done immediately.

DOC. You must admit, Mr. Gorgibus, that it is a fine gift to be able to say things in a few words, and that great talkers, instead of being listened to, often make themselves so obnoxious that one does not hear them; *virtutem primam esse puta compescere linguam*.¹¹ Yes, the finest quality in a gentleman is to speak little.

GOR. You must know then . . .

DOC. Socrates recommended three things very carefully to his disciples: prudence in actions, sobriety in eating, and to say things in few words. Begin then, Mr. Gorgibus.

GOR. That is what I wish to do.

DOC. In few words, without ceremony, without amusing yourself with many speeches, spare me an apophthegm;¹² quick, quick, Mr. Gorgibus, hurry on, avoid prolixity.

GOR. Let me speak then.

DOC. Mr. Gorgibus, shake hands, you speak too much; some one else will have to tell me the cause of this quarrel.

VIL. You must know then, Mr. Doctor . . .

DOC. You are an ignoramus, an illiterate, a man devoid of all method and order,¹³ in good French, an ass. What!

¹¹ "Believe that the first of virtues is to restrain one's tongue." This is one of Erasmus' distichs.

¹² In *The Forced Marriage* Pancrace says to Sganarelle, *Tranchez-moi votre discours d'un apophthegme à la laconienne*, Contract your discourse into a Laconian apophthegm. See Vol. I., scene 6, page 484.

¹³ In *The Forced Marriage* Pancrace calls Sganarelle *un homme ignare de tout bonne discipline*, a man ignorant of all method and order. See Vol. I., Scene 6, page 489.

you commence your narrative without a word of exordium ! Some one else will have to narrate the quarrel. Madam, tell me the particulars of this confusion.

AN. Well ! you see, my big scamp, my wine jug of a husband ?

DOC. Gently, if you please : speak with respect of your husband, when before the beard of a doctor like myself.

AN. Ah ! indeed, yes, doctor ! I care a deal about you and your doctrine, and I am a doctor when I like.

DOC. You are a doctor when you like ; but I think that you would make a funny doctor. You look to me much as if you would follow your own fancies : of the parts of speech, you like but the conjunction ; of the genders, the masculine ; of the declensions, the genitive : of syntax, *mobile cum fixo*, and, in short, of quantity, you love but the dactyl, *quia constat ex una longa et duabus brevibus*.¹⁴ Come now, just tell me the cause, the subject of your combustion.

BAR. Mr. Doctor . . .

DOC. Ah ! that is well begun ; Mr. Doctor, this word has something sweet to the ear, something full of emphasis ; Mr. Doctor !

BAR. According to my will . . .

DOC. That is good . . . according to my will ! The will presupposes the wish, the wish presupposes the means arriving at its ends, and the end presupposes an object ; that is good . . . according to my will.

BAR. I am bursting with rage.

DOC. Take out that word, I am bursting with rage ; it is a low and vulgar term.

BAR. Eh ! Mr. Doctor, do listen to me, I pray you.

DOC. *Audi, quaeso*,¹⁵ Cicero would have said.

BAR. Ah ! upon my word, if it breaks,¹⁶ smashes, or is destroyed, I hardly care ; but you shall hear me, or I will smash your doctoral snout ; and what the devil is this ?

(*Le Barbouillé, Angélique, Gorgibus, Cathau, Ville-*

¹⁴ This Latin cannot be translated. The rule *mobile cum fixo* is taken from Despautère's Syntax. See *The Countess of Escarbagnas*, Scene 19, page 417, note 17.

¹⁵ A Latin translation of Le Barbouillé's words.

¹⁶ The original has *si se rompt*, a pun on the name *Cicéron*.

brequin, each wishing to tell the cause of the quarrel, and the Doctor saying that peace is a fine thing, speak all at once. In the midst of all this noise Le Barbouillé fastens a rope to the Doctor's foot, and makes him fall on his back; Le Barbouillé drags him away by the rope, which he had fastened to his foot, while the Doctor endeavours to speak and to count upon his fingers all his reasons, as if he had not fallen down at all. Le Barbouillé and the Doctor disappear.

GOR. Come daughter, go inside, and try to live in peace with your husband.

VIL. Farewell, good night, and your servant.

(Villebrequin, Gorgibus, and Angélique go away.)

SCENE VII.—VALÈRE, LA VALLÉE.

VAL. I am obliged to you for the pains you have taken, Sir, and I promise you to be at the appointed place in an hour.

LA VAL. It cannot be postponed; and if you but delay a quarter of an hour, the ball will be finished: you shall not have the satisfaction of seeing her whom you love if you do not come directly.

VAL. Let us go together this very moment.

(They go away.)

SCENE VIII.—ANGÉLIQUE, *alone.*

While my husband is out of the way, I shall go and take a turn at a ball, which one of my neighbours is giving. I shall be back before him, for he is somewhere in the tavern; he will not notice that I am out; the rascal leaves me alone at home, as if I were his dog. *(She goes.)*

SCENE IX.—LE BARBOUILLÉ, *alone.*

I knew well enough that I would get the better of this doctor and all his confounded doctrine. To the devil with the ignorant fellow! I have nicely knocked all his science to the ground. I must, however, go and see if the wife has prepared my supper. *(He goes.)*

SCENE X.—ANGÉLIQUE, *alone.*

How unlucky I am! I came too late, the party is over: I arrived just as every one was going; but never

mind, it will be for another time. I shall go home, however, as if nothing had happened. Why! the door is locked; Cathau, Cathau!

SCENE XI.—LE BARBOUILLÉ, *at the window*, ANGÉLIQUE.

BAR. Cathau, Cathau! Well, what has she done, Cathau? and whence come you, Madam slut, at this hour, and in such weather?

AN. Whence come I? just open the door, and I shall tell you afterwards.

BAR. Ah! indeed, you can go and sleep where you came from, or, if you like it better, in the street; I will not open the door to such a gad-about as you. What the deuce! to be all alone at such an hour! I do not know whether it is my fancy, but my forehead seems half as rough again as it usually is.

AN. Well! and what if I am alone, what do you mean by it? You quarrel with me when I have company: what would you have me do?

BAR. You ought to have been within, to look after the supper, to take care of the house, of the children; but, without so many useless words, good-bye, good-night, go to the devil, and leave me in peace.

AN. You will not open to me?

BAR. No, I shall not open.

AN. Eh! my dear little husband, open, I beg of you, my dear sweetheart.

BAR. Ah! you crocodile! ah! you dangerous serpent! you are caressing me to betray me.

AN. Open, open then.

BAR. Good-bye! *Vade retro, Satanas!*

AN. What! you will not open?

BAR. No!

AN. And you have no pity on the wife who loves you so much?

BAR. No, I am inflexible; you have offended me, I am as vindictive as the devil, that is, putting it more strongly, I am inexorable.

AN. Are you aware that, if you drive me to despair, and make me angry, I shall do something which you will regret?

BAR. And what will you do, you nice she-dog?

AN. There ; if you do not open to me, I shall kill myself before the door ; my parents who will no doubt come here before going to bed, to know if we have made it up together, will find me dead, and you shall be hanged.

BAR. Ah, ah, ah, ah, the great ninny ! and who of the two will lose most by that ? Go, go, you are not so foolish as to do such a trick as that.

AN. You will not believe it then ? There, there, here is my knife quite ready ; if you do not open to me, I shall plunge it into my heart this very moment.

BAR. Take care, the point is very sharp.

AN. You will not open to me ?

BAR. I have told you a score of times already that I will not open ; kill yourself, die, go to the devil ; what do I care.

AN. (*Pretending to stab herself*). Good-bye then . . . Ah ! I am dead.

BAR. Can she have been fool enough to do such a trick ? I must go down with the candle to see.¹⁷

AN. I must catch you. If I can get cunningly into the house while you are looking for me, it will be my turn next.

BAR. Well ! just as if I ought not to have known that she was not such a fool. She is dead ; and, however, she runs like Pacolet's horse.¹⁸ Upon my word, she has really given me a fright. She has done well to get out of the way ; for if I had found her alive, after having given me such a fright, I should have dealt her five or six kicks to teach her to play the fool. I shall go to bed now. Oh ! oh ! I think that the wind has closed the door. Eh ! Cathau, Cathau, open the door.

AN. Cathau, Cathau ! Well ? what has she done to you, Cathau ? and whence come you, Master sot ? Ah ! indeed, my parents, who will be here in a minute, shall know

¹⁷ Molière has employed a great part of this scene in the eighth scene of the third act of *George Dandin*. See Vol. II., p. 560.

¹⁸ In the legend of *Valentine and Orson*, Pacolet is a dwarf in the service of Lady Clerimond, who has an enchanted flying horse of wood, which was very swift, and carried the rider anywhere. Rabelais mentions the horse in the twenty-fourth chapter of the second book of *Pantagruel*.

the truth. Wine-barrel, infamous wretch, you do not stir from the tavern, and you leave a poor woman with her little ones to dance attendance upon you all day long, without caring whether they want for anything or not.

BAR. Open quickly, you she-devil, or I shall break your head.

SCENE XII.—GORGIBUS, VILLEBREQUIN, ANGÉLIQUE, LE BARBOUILLÉ.

GOR. What is this! always disputes, quarrels, and dissensions.

VIL. Eh, what! will you never be agreed?

AN. But just look, here he is drunk, and comes back at this hour, to make a horrible noise; he threatens me.

GOR. But this is also not a time to come home. Ought you not, as a good father of a family, to retire early and live in concord with your wife?

BAR. May the devil take me if I have stirred away from the house: just ask these gentlemen who are yonder in the pit; it is she who has just come back. Ah! how innocence is oppressed.

VIL. Come, come, make it up; ask her pardon.

BAR. I! pardon! I would sooner have the devil run away with her. I am so angry that I do not know what I am doing.

GOR. Come, daughter, kiss your husband, and be good friends.¹⁹

SCENE XIII.—THE DOCTOR, *at the window, in his night-cap and vest*; LE BARBOUILLÉ, VILLEBREQUIN, GORGIBUS, ANGÉLIQUE..

DOC. What! for ever noise, disorder, dissension, quarrels, debates, differences, combustions, and never ceasing altercations? What is the matter? what is it then? There is no peace to be had.

¹⁹ These three last scenes have been utilized by Molière in the eighth and following Scenes of the third Act of *George Dandin* (see Vol. II., p. 560; just as the scenes in which the Doctor appears seem to be the outline of the sixth Scene of the second Act of *The Love Tiff* (see Vol. I., p. 97, and of the sixth Scene of *The Forced Marriage* (see Vol. I., p. 484.

VIL. It is nothing, Sir Doctor ; everyone is agreed.

DOC. Talking of agreed, would you like me to read you a chapter of Aristotle, in which he proves that all the parts of the universe exist only because they agree among themselves ?²⁰

VIL. Is it very long ?

DOC. No, not very long : it contains about sixty or eighty pages.

VIL. Good-bye, good-night, we are much obliged to you.

GOR. No, we do not want it.

DOC. You do not wish for it ?

GOR. No.

DOC. Good-bye then, since it is even so ; good-night : *latine, bona nox.*

VIL. Let us go and sup together.

²⁰ This may perhaps be the fifth chapter of the apocryphal treatise, *About the World*. It is not very long ; but the doctor was probably going to comment upon it.

LE MÉDECIN VOLANT.
COMÉDIE.

THE FLYING DOCTOR.
A COMEDY IN ONE ACT.
(*THE ORIGINAL IN PROSE.*)

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

THE subject of *The Flying Doctor* is probably imitated from an Italian farce, *Il Medico Volante*, which was never printed, but often acted, and in which the celebrated Harlequin, Dominico, who arrived at Paris in 1660, produced some sensation. Boursault (see Introductory Notice to *The Impromptu of Versailles*, Vol. I., p. 435,) wrote also a *Flying Doctor*, which was acted in the month of November 1661, at the Hotel de Bourgogne, and which is taken either from the Italian farce from which Molière borrowed his play, or from Molière himself.

The Flying Doctor was acted several times in Paris, from the years 1659 until 1664, and twice at Court.

Molière made use of several of the scenes of this farce for his *Love is the Best Doctor* (see Vol. II., p. 135, and *The Physician in Spite of Himself* (see Vol. II., p. 247.).

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

GORGIBUS, *Lucile's father.*

VALÈRE, *Lucile's lover.*

SGANARELLE, *his servant.*¹

GROS-RENÉ, *Gorgibus' servant.*²

A LAWYER.

LUCILE, *Gorgibus' daughter.*

SABINE, *her cousin.*

¹ Sganarelle is, in *The Physician in Spite of Himself* (see Vol. II., p. 249,) also the name of the servant, disguised as a physician.

² See Introductory Notice to *The Impromptu of Versailles*, Vol. I., page 435.

THE FLYING DOCTOR.

(*LE MÉDECIN VOLANT.*)

SCENE I.—VALÈRE, SABINE.

VAL. Well ! Sabine, what advice do you give me ?

SAB. Really, there is a good deal of news. My uncle wishes resolutely that my cousin should wed Villebrequin, and matters are so far advanced that I believe they would have been married this very day, if you were not loved ; but, as my cousin has confided to me the secret of her love for you, and as we find ourselves reduced to extremities through the avarice of my niggardly uncle, we have bethought ourselves of a capital trick to delay the marriage. At the moment I am speaking to you, my cousin is pretending to be ill ; and the good old man, who is sufficiently credulous, has sent me to fetch a doctor. If you could send one of your intimate friends, to act in concert with us, he would advise the patient to take the country air. The old man could not fail to lodge my cousin in the pavilion which is at the end of the garden, and, by this means, you could converse with her without the old man's knowledge, marry her, and let him swear his fill with Villebrequin.

VAL. But the difficulty is to find so quickly a doctor such as I wish, and who would be willing to risk so much in my service. I tell you candidly. I do not know one.

SAB. I have bethought myself of something. Suppose

you dress your servant up as a doctor: there is nothing easier than to hoodwink the old man.

VAL. He is a clumsy lout who would spoil everything; but for want of some one else, we must make use of him. Farewell, I am going to fetch him. Where am I to find that scoundrel just now? but here he comes quite opportunely.

SCENE II.—VALÈRE, SGANARELLE.

VAL. Ah! my poor Sganarelle, how glad I am to see you! I need you for a matter of importance; but, as I do not know what you are capable of doing. . . .

SGAN. What I am capable of doing, Sir? Just try me in any matter of consequence, or for something important; for instance, just send me to see what o'clock it is by some time-piece, to find out the price of butter in the market, to bait a horse, then you will find out what I am capable of doing.

VAL. That is not it; you must counterfeit a doctor.

SGAN. I, a doctor, Sir! I am ready to do whatever pleases you; but, to act the doctor, by your leave I shall do nothing of the kind; and, good Heavens, how should I set about it? Indeed, Sir, you are making fun of me.

VAL. If you will undertake this, I shall give you ten pistoles.

SGAN. Ah! when it comes to ten pistoles, I will not say that I am not a doctor; for, look here, Sir, I am not sufficiently clever to tell you the truth. But where am I to go when I am a doctor?

VAL. To Mr. Gorgibus, to see his daughter who is ill; but you are a clumsy lout who, instead of doing things rightly, might . . .

SGAN. Eh! Good Heavens, Sir, do not worry yourself so much; I shall answer for it that I will kill a person as easily as any doctor in town. There is a common proverb: after death the doctor; but you shall find that, if I have a hand in it, they shall say: after the doctor, ware death! But nevertheless, when I think of it, it is very difficult to act the doctor, and suppose I do no good. . .

VAL. Nothing is more easy in this case; Gorgibus is a simple, coarse fellow, who will allow himself to be non-

plussed by your discourse, provided you speak of Hippocrates and Galen, and be somewhat brazen-faced.

SGAN. Which means that I am to talk philosophy and mathematics to him. Leave it to me, if he be the easy fellow you say, I answer for it all; only come and get me a doctor's gown, tell me what I am to do, and give me my diploma, which are the ten pistoles promised.

(Exeunt Valère and Sganarelle.)

SCENE III.—GORGIBUS, GROS-RENÉ.

GOR. Quick, go and fetch a doctor; for my daughter is very ill, and make haste.

GROS. What the deuce! why do you wish to give your daughter to an old man? Do not you think that it is the wish to have a young man that worries her? Do you perceive the connection there is, etc. *(Gibberish).*³

GOR. Go, quickly; I see well enough that this illness will postpone the nuptials.

GROS. And that is the very thing that annoys me. I meant to line my belly well,⁴ and behold me done out of it. I am going to fetch a doctor for myself, as well as for your daughter. I am desperate. *(Exit.)*

SCENE IV.—SABINE, GORGIBUS, SGANARELLE.

SAB. I find you at the right moment, uncle, to tell you some good news. I bring you the ablest doctor in the world, a man who comes from foreign lands, who is master of the most important secrets, and who will, no doubt, cure my cousin. By some good fortune he has been pointed out to me, and I have brought him hither. He is so learned that I wish with all my heart that I were ill, so that he might cure me.

GOR. Where then is he?

SAB. He is following me; look, here he is.

³ Jacqueline, in *The Physician in Spite of Himself* (Act ii., Scene 1), makes the same observation. The word "gibberish" means that the actor who played the part improvised after this.

⁴ The original has *je croyais refaire mon ventre d'une bonne carrelure*. *Carrelure* are the new soles put on shoes or boots,—hence a new lining for the stomach. As for Gros René's corpulence, see *The Love-Tiff*, Vol. I., page 79, note 1.

GOR. The doctor's most humble servant. I have sent for you to look at my daughter who is very ill; I place all my hope in you.

SGAN. Hippocrates says, and Galen, by undoubtful arguments, demonstrates that a person is not in good health when he is ill. You are right to place your hope in me; for I am the greatest, the ablest, the most learned physician in the vegetable, sensitive and mineral faculty.

GOR. I am delighted at it.

SGAN. Do not imagine that I am an ordinary physician, a commonplace doctor. All the other physicians are, in my opinion, nothing but abortions of doctors. I have peculiar talents, I have secrets. *Salamalec, salamalec.* Rodriguez, have you a heart? *Signor, si; Signor, no. Per omnia sæcula sæculorum.*⁵ But just let us look.

SAB. Eh! it is not he who is ill, it is his daughter.

SGAN. It matters not; the blood of the father and the daughter are but one thing; and, by the change of the father's, I can ascertain the disease of the daughter. Mr. Gorgibus, is it possible to see the urine of the patient?

GOR. Certainly; Sabine, go quickly and get the urine of my daughter. (*Exit Sabine*). Doctor, I am very much afraid that she is dying.

SGAN. Ah! let her be careful not to do so! she must not amuse herself by allowing herself to die without a prescription of the doctor.⁶ (*Sabine re-enters*). This urine shows a great deal of heat, a great inflammation of the bowels; it is, however, not so very bad.

GOR. Eh! what, Sir, you are swallowing it?

SGAN. Do not be surprised at that: doctors, as a rule, are satisfied with looking at it; but I am a doctor out of the common, I swallow it, for by tasting it I discern much better the cause and the effects of the disease. But, to tell you the truth, there was too little to judge by: let her make water again.

⁵ The words which Sganarelle utters are partly Italian, Spanish, Latin, Arabic, and a quotation from Corneille's *Cid*. Whilst saying them, he feels Gorgibus' pulse.

⁶ This is also found in the sixth Scene of the second Act of *The Physician in Spite of Himself*.

SAB. (*Goes and comes back again*). I have had a deal of trouble to make her pass water.

SGAN. Is this all! it is not worth while! Make her pass water copiously, copiously. If all patients pass water in this way, I should like to be a physician all my life.

SAB. (*Goes and comes back again*). This is all there is to be had: she cannot make any more.

SGAN. What! Mr. Gorgibus, your daughter passes but drops? She is but a poor performer, your daughter; I see well enough that I shall have to prescribe a water-making potion. Is there no way to see the patient?

SAB. She is up; if you wish, I will make her come hither.

SCENE V.—SABINE, GORGIBUS, SGANARELLE, LUCILE.

SGAN. Well! Miss, you are ill?

LU. Yes, Sir.

SGAN. So much the worse! It is a sign that you are not in good health. Do you feel any great pain in the head, or in the loins?

LU. Yes, Sir.

SGAN. That is very well. Yes, this great physician, in the chapter which he has written on the nature of animals, says . . . a hundred fine things; and, as the humours which have a connexion have much of a relation; as, for instance, as melancholy is the enemy of joy, and as the bile which spreads through the body makes us become yellow, and as nothing is more opposed to health than disease, we may say, with this great man, that your daughter is very ill. I must give you a prescription.

GOR. Quick, a table, paper and ink.

SGAN. Is there any one here who knows how to write?

GOR. Do not you know how to do so?

SGAN. Ah! I did not recollect; I have so many things running in my head that I forget half of them . . . I think it necessary that your daughter should have some fresh air; that she should go and amuse herself in the country.

GOR. We have a very fine garden, and some rooms that look out upon it; if you deem it fit, I shall make her lodge there.

SGAN. Let us go and look at the spot. (*Excunt all.*)

SCENE VI.—THE LAWYER, *alone.*

I have heard that the daughter of Mr. Gorgibus is ill ; I must inquire about her health, and offer her my services as a friend of the whole family. Hullo, hullo ! is Mr. Gorgibus at home ?

SCENE VII.—GORGIBUS, THE LAWYER.

LAW. Having heard of your daughter's illness, I have come to tell you that I am concerned about it, and to offer you anything in my power.

GOR. I was within with the most learned of men.

LAW. Is there no means of conversing with him for a moment ?

SCENE VIII.—GORGIBUS, THE LAWYER, SGANARELLE.

GOR. Sir, this is one of my friends, a very able gentleman, who wishes to talk to you, and to converse with you.

SGAN. I have not the leisure, Mr. Gorgibus : I must attend to my patients. I will not take the right-hand side with you, Sir.

LAW. Sir, after what Mr. Gorgibus has told me of your merit and knowledge, I have the greatest desire in the world to have the honour of your acquaintance ; and I have taken the liberty to greet you with this intention ; I hope you will not take it amiss. We must admit that all those who excel in any science are worthy of great praise, and particularly those who profess medicine, as much for its own usefulness as because it contains several other sciences, which makes its perfect knowledge very difficult : and it is much to the point that Hippocrates says, in his first aphorism : *Vita brevis, ars vero longa, occasio autem præceps, experimentum periculosum, judicium difficile.*⁷

SGAN. (*To Gorgibus*). *Ficile tantina pota baril cambustibus.*⁸

⁷ Life is short, art is long, the occasion fleeting, the experiment full of dangers, the appreciation difficult.

⁸ Sganarelle has remembered only part of the last word, *ficile*, of the lawyer : all the rest is nonsense.

LAW. You are not one of those physicians who apply themselves only to those physics called rational or dogmatic, and I believe that you practise it daily with much success, *experientia magistra rerum*.⁹ The first men who professed medicine were so much esteemed for this beautiful science, that they were placed among the gods for the splendid cures which they performed daily. We ought not to despise a physician for not having restored the health of his patient, inasmuch as it does not altogether depend upon his remedies, nor upon his knowledge, *interdum docta plus valet arte malum*.¹⁰ I fear I am intruding, Sir: I bid you farewell, with the hope that at the next opportunity I shall have the honour of conversing with you more at leisure. Your moments are precious, etc.

(*Exit Lawyer.*)

GOR. What think you of this gentleman?

SGAN. He has some trifling knowledge. If he had remained a little longer, I should have led him on to some sublime and elevated matter. I must, however, take my leave of you. (*Gorgibus gives him some money*). Eh! what would you do?

GOR. I know what is due to you.

SGAN. Are you jesting, Mr. Gorgibus? I shall not accept it; I am not a mercenary man. (*Taking the money*). Your very humble servant.¹¹

(*Exit Sganarelle. Gorgibus enters his house.*)

SCENE IX.—VALÈRE, *alone*.

I do not know what Sganarelle may have been up to: I have had no news from him, and I am very anxious where to find him. (*Sganarelle comes back in his servant's dress*). Good, here he is. Well! Sganarelle, what have you done since I saw you?

⁹ It is experience which teaches all things. This is one of Erasmus' adages, but slightly altered in sense and in the order of the words.

¹⁰ This is from Ovid's *Epistles*. Sometimes the evil is stronger than art and science.

¹¹ This is also found in the eighth Scene of the second Act of *The Physician in Spite of Himself*.

SCENE X.—VALÈRE, SGANARELLE.

SGAN. Wonder upon wonder ; I have managed so well that Gorgibus takes me for a very able doctor. I have introduced myself into his house ; I have advised him to give his daughter fresh air ; she is now in an apartment at the end of the garden, so that she is far away from the old man, and you may go and see her very easily,

VAL. Ah, what joy you are giving me ! Without losing any time, I shall go and see her immediately. (*Exit.*)

SGAN. One must confess that this Mr. Gorgibus is a regular nincompoop to allow himself to be deceived in this manner. (*Perceiving Gorgibus*). Ah ! good Heavens, all is lost ; this one blow knocks the whole of the medical faculty down ; but I must hoodwink him.

SCENE XI.—SGANARELLE, GORGIBUS.

GOR. Good-day, Sir.

SGAN. Your servant, Sir ; you behold a poor fellow in despair : perhaps you may know a physician who has lately arrived in this town, who performs some wonderful cures.

GOR. Yes, I do know him ; he has just gone away from here.

SGAN. I am his brother, Sir : we are twins ; and, as we resemble each other very much, we are often taken for one another.

GOR. May the deuce take me¹² if I have not been deceived by it. And what is your name ?

SGAN. Narcissus, Sir, at your service. You must know that, being in his study, I spilt two vials of essence which were at the edge of his table. At once he flew into such a violent rage with me, that he has turned me out of his house ; he never wishes to see me any more, so that I am a poor wretch at present, without support, without any means, without an acquaintance.

GOR. Come, I will make your peace ; I am one of his friends, and I promise to make it up for you with him ; I shall speak to him about it the moment I see him.

¹² The original has *Je me dédonne au diable*. See *The Jealousy of le Barbouillé*, page 584, note 10.

SGAN. I shall be much obliged to you, Mr. Gorgibus.

(Exit Sganarelle, who re-enters immediately in his doctor's gown.)

SCENE XII.—SGANARELLE, GORGIBUS.

SGAN. One must admit that if patients will not follow the orders of the doctor, and give themselves up to debauch . . .

GOR. Your very humble servant, Doctor. I have come to ask you a favour.

SGAN. What is it, Sir? Is it a question of rendering you a service?

GOR. I have just met your brother, Sir, who is exceedingly sorry to . . .

SGAN. He is a rogue, Mr. Gorgibus.

GOR. I can answer for it that he so much regrets that he has made you angry . . .

SGAN. He is a sot, Mr. Gorgibus.

GOR. Eh! Sir, do you wish to drive the poor fellow to despair?

SGAN. Let me hear no more about him; but look at the impertinence of the rogue to come and find you to make his peace for him; I beg of you to say no more about him.

GOR. In Heaven's name, Doctor! do this for my sake. If I can oblige you in any other thing, I will do so with all my heart. I have pledged myself to this, and . . .

SGAN. You ask me with so much urgency that although I had sworn never to pardon him, come, shake hands, I pardon him. I assure you that I have done great violence to myself, and that I must feel very kindly towards you. Farewell, Mr. Gorgibus.

(Gorgibus enters his house, exit Sganarelle.)

SCENE XIII.—VALÈRE, SGANARELLE.

VAL. I must admit that I could never have believed that Sganarelle could have acquitted himself so well of his task. *(Sganarelle enters in his servant's dress.)* Ah! my dear fellow, under what obligations I am to you! what joy I have! and . . .

SGAN. Upon my word, you are speaking very easily about it. Gorgibus fell in with me ; and, without some trick which I contrived, the whole of the train would have been discovered. (*Perceiving Gorgibus*). But be off, here he is. (*Exit Valère*.)

SCENE XIV.—GORGIBUS, SGANARELLE.

GOR. I was looking everywhere for you to tell you that I have spoken to your brother : he has pledged me his word that he would forgive you ; but, to make more sure of it, I wish him to embrace you in my presence ; go into my house, and I shall go and fetch him.

SGAN. Ah ! Mr. Gorgibus, I do not think you will find him just now ; and besides, I shall not remain in your house : I fear his anger too much.

GOR. Ah ! but you shall remain, for I will lock you in. I am going now to fetch your brother ; fear nothing, I answer for it that he is no longer angry. (*Exit Gorgibus*.)

SGAN. (*From the window*). In truth I am caught this time ; there is no longer a means of escape. The cloud is very thick, and I am sorely afraid that, if it bursts, it will hail plentiful cudgel-blows on my back, or that, by some prescription much stronger than that of any doctor, they will apply at least a royal plaster to my shoulders.¹³ My prospects look very bad : but why despair ? Since I have done so much, let us play the rogue to the end. Yes, yes, I must still get out of it, and show that Sganarelle is the king of rogues.

(*Sganarelle jumps through
the window and exit.*)

SCENE XV.—GROS-RENÉ, GORGIBUS, SGANARELLE.

GROS. Ah ! upon my word, this is funny ! what the deuce are they leaping through the windows for ! I must remain here, and see what all this will lead to.

GOR. I cannot find this doctor ; I do not know where the deuce he has hid himself. (*Perceiving Sganarelle, who is coming back in a doctor's gown*). But here he is. Sir, it is not sufficient to have pardoned your brother ; I

¹³ Sganarelle means by "a royal plaster" a brand.

beseech you, for my satisfaction, to embrace him: he is in my house, and I have been looking for you everywhere to entreat you to make this reconciliation in my presence.

SGAN. You are jesting, Mr. Gorgibus; is it not sufficient that I pardon him? I never wish to see him again.

GOR. But, Sir, for the love of me.

SGAN. I can refuse you nothing: tell him to come down.

(While Gorgibus enters the house by the door, Sganarelle gets in at the window.)

GOR. *(At the window)*. Here is your brother waiting for you below; he has promised me to do all you wish.

SGAN. *(At the window)*. Mr. Gorgibus, I entreat you to make him come here; I beseech you let it be in private that I ask his pardon, for no doubt he will inflict a hundred reprimands, a hundred reproaches upon me before every one.

(Gorgibus comes out of his house by the door. Sganarelle by the window.)

GOR. Well, then, I will tell him so . . . Sir, he says he is ashamed, and begs you to come in, so that he may ask your pardon in private. Here is the key; you can go in; I pray you not to refuse me, and to give me this satisfaction.

SGAN. There is nothing I would not do for your satisfaction; you shall hear in what manner I will treat him. *(At the window)*. Ah! here you are, you rogue.—Brother, I ask your pardon, I assure you that it was not my fault.—Not your fault, you good-for-nothing, you rogue, I will teach you manners, to have the audacity to bother Mr. Gorgibus, to pester his brain with your stupid tricks!—Brother—Hold your tongue, I tell you—I will not oblige . . . Hold your tongue, you rogue.

GROS. Who the deuce think you, is in your house at present?

GOR. It is the doctor and Narcissus, his brother; they had a little quarrel, and they are making it up.

GROS. The deuce take it! they are but one.

SGAN. *(At the window)*. So that you are, I will teach you how to behave. How he lowers his eyes! he knows

well enough that he has done wrong, the hang-dog ! Ah ! the hypocrite, how he pretends to be a saint ?

GROS. Just ask him a moment, Sir, to place his brother at the window.

GOR. I say, doctor, I pray you to make your brother come to the window.

SGAN. (*From the window*). He is unworthy to be seen by decent people, and besides I cannot bear him near me.

GOR. Do not refuse me this favour, Sir, after all those you have granted me.

SGAN. (*From the window*). Really, Mr. Gorgibus, you have such a power over me that I can refuse you nothing. Show yourself, you rogue. (*After having disappeared for a moment, he comes back in his servant's clothes*). —Mr. Gorgibus, I am obliged to you. (*He disappears once more, and re-appears immediately, in his doctors gown*).—Well ! have you *once more* seen this image of a good-for-nothing ?

GROS. Upon my word, they are but one ; and, to prove it, just tell him that you would like to see them together.

GOR. But do me the favor to make him appear together with you, and to embrace him before me at the window.

SGAN. (*From the window*). It is a thing which I would refuse to any one but you ; but, to show you that I will do anything for the love of you, I will resolve to do it, though with difficulty, and wish him beforehand to ask your pardon for all the trouble which he has given you.—Yes, Mr. Gorgibus, I ask your pardon for having importuned you so much, and promise you, brother, in the presence of Mr. Gorgibus here, to behave so well for the future, that you shall have no more grounds of complaint, at the same time entreating you to think no more about what has passed.

(*He embraces his cap and his collar,
which he has placed on his elbow.*)

GOR. Well, are they not both there ?

GROS. Ah ! upon my word, he is a sorcerer.

SGAN. (*Coming out of the house, as the doctor*). Here is the key of your house which I return to you, Sir ; I did

not wish this rogue to come down with me, for he disgraces me; I should not like him to be seen in my company, in the town where I am held in some repute. You will tell him to come out when it shall please you. I wish you a good-day, and am your servant, &c.

(He pretends to go, and after having slipped off his gown, re-enters the house by the window.)

GOR. I must go and set this poor fellow free; in truth, if he has forgiven him, it has not been without much ill-treatment.

(He enters the house, and comes out of it with Sganarelle in his servant's clothes.)

SGAN. I thank you, Sir, for the trouble you have taken, and the kindness you have shown; I shall be obliged to you all my life.

GROS. Where do you think the doctor is at present?

GOR. He is gone.

GROS. *(Who has picked up the gown of Sganarelle)*. I have got him under my arm. Here is the rogue who acted the doctor, and who deceived you. While he is deceiving you, and acting a play in your house, Valère and your daughter are together going to the very devil.

GOR. Oh! what an unfortunate wretch I am! but you will be hanged, rogue, scoundrel!

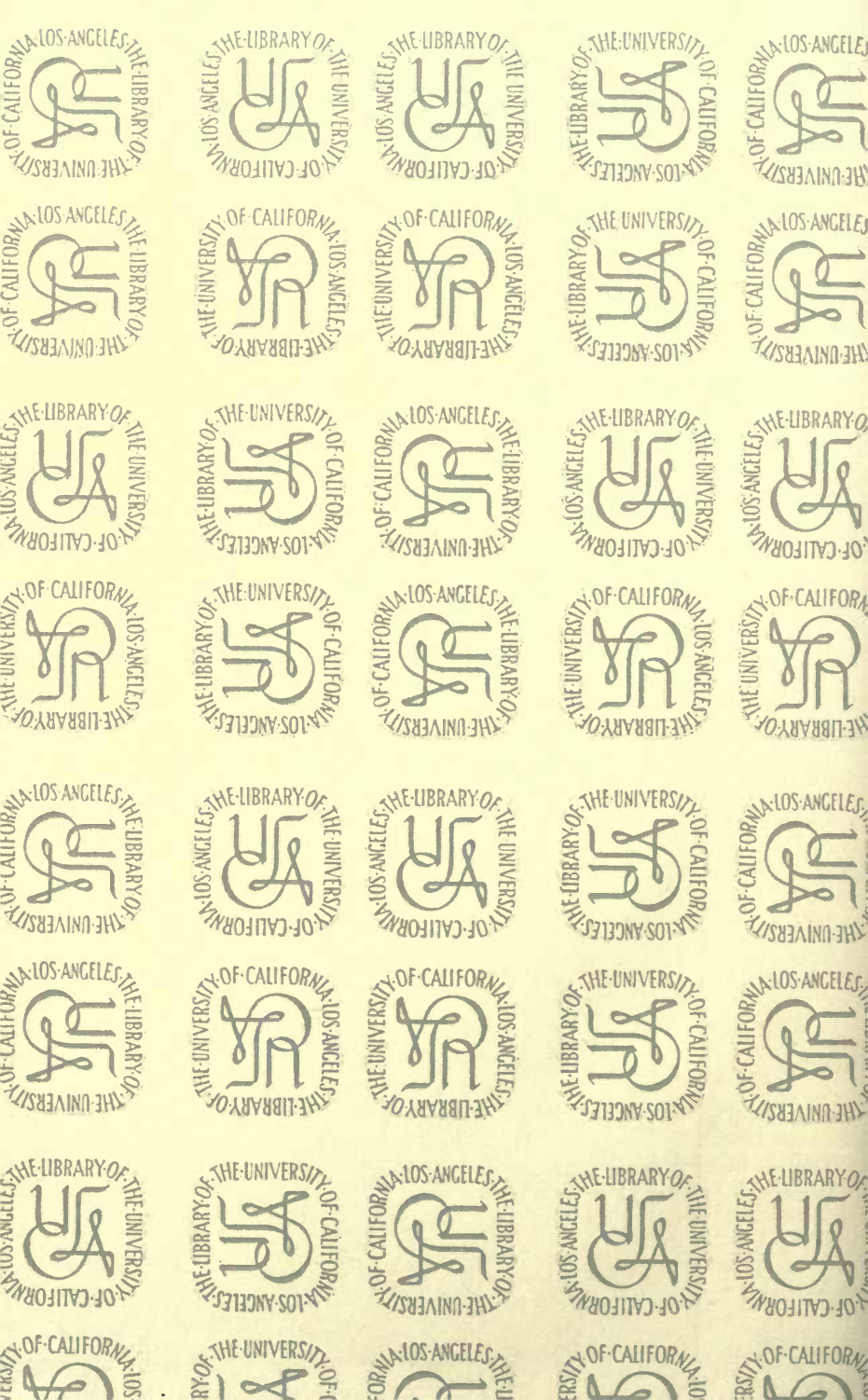
SGAN. Why do you want to hang me, Sir? Just listen to one word, if you please; it is true that it was by my contrivance that my master is with your daughter; but, in serving him, I have done you no harm: he is a very suitable match for her, by birth as well as by wealth. Believe me, do not make a noise which would lead to your confusion, and send this rogue to the devil together with Villebrequin. But here are our lovers.

SCENE XVI.—VALÈRE, LUCILE, GORGIBUS, SGANARELLE.

VAL. We throw ourselves at your feet.

GOR. I forgive you, and reckon myself fortunate to have been deceived by Sganarelle, seeing that it gives me such a good son-in-law. Let us go and enjoy ourselves, and drink to the health of the company.

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